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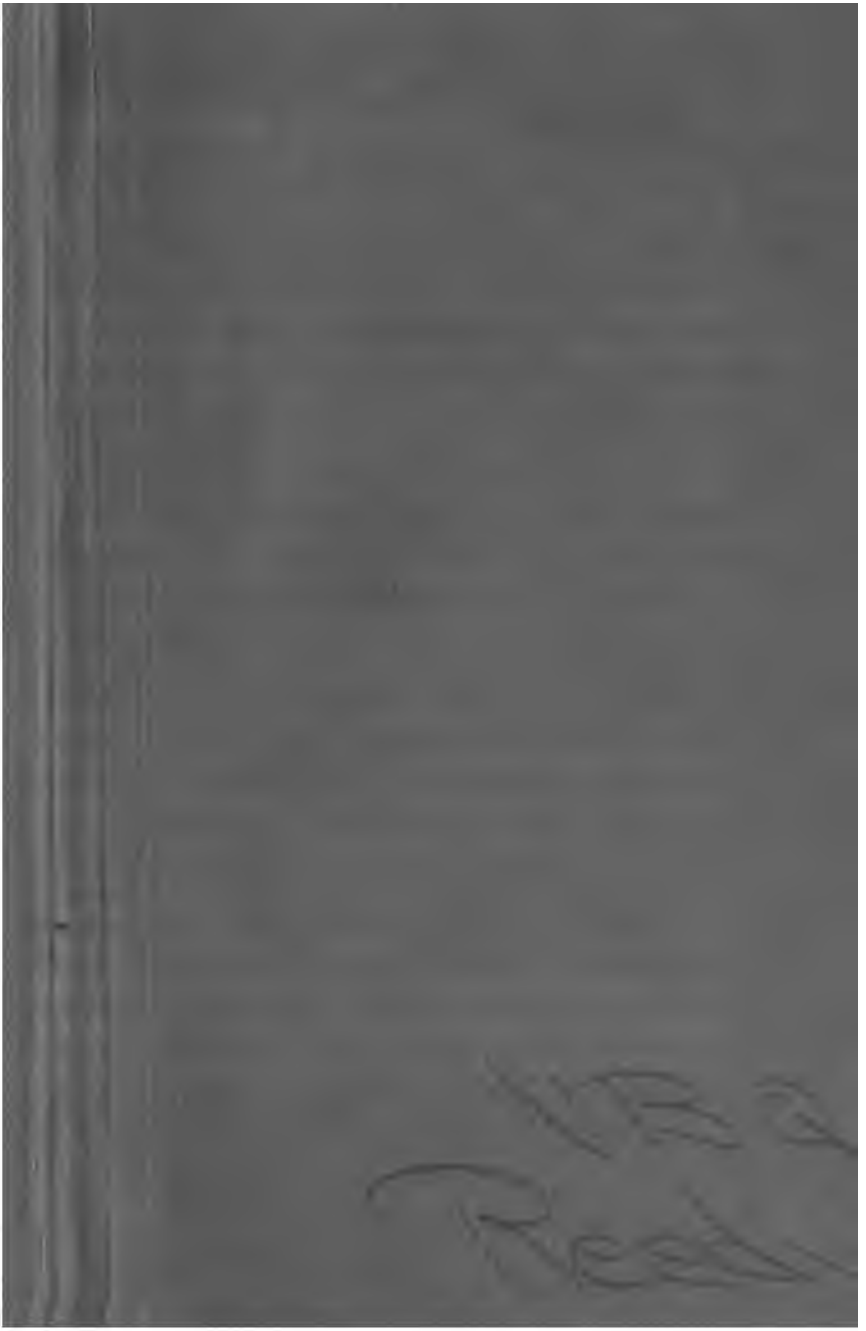
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THE LAW OF LOVE

BEING FANTASIES OF SCIENCE AND SENTIMENT INKED INTO ENGLISH TO CHEER UP THE GLOOMSTERS



BY WM. MARION REEDY.

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THE LAW OF LOVE

VERS DORES

O atheist man! are you the only one imbued
With thought, on earth where everything with life 's a-teem?
Though license give your forces fuller scope 't would seem
No Universe within your counsels you include.

In every beast may'st note a mind with thought indued;
Each flower is a soul in Nature's ample scheme;
With mysteries of love her steely metals gleam;
"All things are sentient!" and your lesser powers elude.

Behold within the sightless wall a watchful eye!
Somewhat of Trinity within all matter hides. . .
To impious uses, therefore, turn it not awry!

Oft in the lowliest Earth-born, hidden, God abides;
And like the nascent eye beneath the eyelid's fold,
The stone's close sheath a spirit pure doth hold.

Gerard de Nerval, translated by A. Lenalie.

PROF. VON SCHROEN'S recent, alleged discovery of life and sex in crystals need not startle the world. Man has felt that there was nothing inanimate, from the beginning of time. His intuition has always been in advance of his reason ❧ His poetry has led his science everywhere. The oneness of things is being demonstrated in these days; that is all. Matter and spirit are but manifestations of force. Some philosophies have pushed this oneness of things to the end of maintaining that all matter is illusion and that our thoughts themselves are illusions and we ourselves but a dream within a mighty dream. ¶ Biology has resolved life back to the single cell, in which all the senses are converged ❧ Physics have shown sight and touch and smell and hearing to be but varying apprehensions of one force. Light, heat and sound are motion, swifter or slower. Sex is a differentiation of the single cell. Philologists assert that, originally, the name of God in every language was both masculine & feminine. ¶ Life is but force. Matter holds together by force. Matter, therefore, has life. This is a logic irrefuta-

ble, to a mind in touch with the progress of study in all the sciences in this time. The star is brother to the clod; the moth is kin to the mastodon. Worlds are made to blossom in space as flowers are fructified by floating pollen. Mingling atoms make suns ❧ Cell seeks affinity with cell. Dust blown from the unimaginable outer rim of silence finds its fellow dust and, engaging in amorous whirl, a nebula is formed and from that nebula suns and systems of suns. Worlds in contact give birth to worlds. That crystals meet and kiss and mingle and produce other crystals is only "the way of a man with a maid." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Love is the only law. Love is spirit, and matter is the child of spirit. All this any man who reads may know ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Professor Von Schroen claims to be able to prove what Emanuel Swedenborg taught, of himself, of his insight of the spirit, revealing more than any microscope. Swedenborg taught what Gautama taught before him. The child who, after stubbing his toe, scolds the obstacle to his precarious progress, voices the implanted intuition that matter is a form of life. All personifications

of matter and force tell us that they are recognized as kin to ourselves, and to our thoughts and feelings ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ¶ Is all this dreaming? Was Thomas Huxley a dreamer? Listen to him: "In itself it is of little moment whether we express the phenomena of Matter in terms of Spirit or the phenomena of Spirit in terms of Matter." A confession of their ultimate indistinguishability ❧ They are different effects upon our apprehension of the same force. Some have said that matter is mere resistance to force. "Without this resistance, Motion would have been without result, for its action would have been infinite," says Balzac, and Herbert Spencer says, "Without resistance there can be merely empty extension." This is the maddest materialism, but Newton holds that it is absurd to suppose that mere "inanimate brute matter can operate upon and affect other matter without the mediation of something which is not material." ❧ ❧ ❧ This mediating something is spirit—or, as mystics say, the Word. Its manifestations are attraction, repulsion, gravitation ❧ All these are Motion. "Nowhere," says Balzac, "is motion sterile. Every-

where it engenders Number; but it may be neutralized by a superior resistance, as in minerals." This neutralization, Professor Schroen's discovery disproves conclusively—if he has made the discovery. The motion is in the crystal itself; the instinct whereby it seeks out its mate that it may "increase and multiply." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ There is no rest. Inert matter is in motion, according to the newest science. The atoms of matter can make way for the X-ray—itself material—and unite again, as water unites after one has dipped his finger in it. Water is full of life. Minerals are, if we deceive not ourselves in recent discoveries, only a denser water. All is fluid in more or less tangible shape, and thought itself is fluid, according to the biologists. Here we have the thought of old Heraclitus, who preached "the flowing, flowing, flowing of the world," and all things in it ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Out of the single cell—protoplasm, amebae, vorticella—in combination, by its seeking its own, comes variation or number and, ultimately, Harmony. Thus we grasp the Platonic idea of Number and music—the famous "music of the spheres,"

which the uninitiate have laughed at evermore. Number through Motion resulting in Harmony gives us Law ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ All this implies the operation of the "unseen." Our most materialistic sciences deal ever with the "unseen"; with the undulatory theory of light, of sound, of heat, with gravitation ❧ They are all imponderable, invisible forces or substances. The atoms, themselves almost inconceivable, operate upon one another in the workings of these forces. The pollen from the flower finds its way to another, miles away, and fecundates it as Schmid's father, born in Germany, found his mother, born in Australia, to the seemingly unimportant end that Schmid should come to be ❧ Surely those ancients were not far wrong in deeming the atoms themselves endowed with conscious intelligence. ¶ There is life in everything and everywhere, and no life without love ❧ As a man lies with a woman to perpetuate their kind, so do all things, infinitesimal and vast, through Nature, bed with each other. The phallus is a mightier symbol than the virtuous wot of. It is found even in the Cross. The sciences are a study of the universal lust.

Flower fecundates flower, though one sends its seed to another on the limbs of a wandering and uncertain bee. There is a rain of life between the planets. Collisions scatter world-fragments in the far furrows of space and the fragments are gathered up by other planets and life transferred to them from systems that have ceased to be. In mathematics numbers cohabit and the results are glimpses of the secrets of Infinity. In chemistry fluids and solids mingle to make things new. In physics the savagery and the tenderness of force, in destruction or reproduction, produce power. Biology shows us the operation of the same affection to the development of life ✻ Differentiation, selection, organization—all these are processes of intelligent amorousness in matter ✻ This intelligent amorousness is the spirit in matter—the "love that makes the world go round," that "holds the universe ensphered." ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻ But where does it end—this intelligent amorousness? There is a limit to the finite. But the finite is part of the Infinite. It would seem that the pursuit of this law of love would bring one only to the Unknowable, pushing it only a little farther back.

¶ Love may follow whither love leads—unto the essence of God even—for God is love. The material aspect of love, dwelt on thus far, need not deter us from pushing "farther North." ✍ To whoso believes in the oneness of Matter and Spirit, there is no Unknowable ✍ The end of the law of Love, and of the spiritual faculties for its perception, can be the knowing of this Unknowable—union with the Infinite. Let us make a flight! ✍ ✍ ✍ Progress and increase must end, say the materialists. Evolution must cease somewhere, and when it does cease dissolution has begun. Attraction in matter rules for awhile. Concentration is the law. Repulsion comes into play predominantly. Dissolution is the law. The struggle is everlasting between Attraction and Repulsion. Dissolution is but a state in which further Evolution ferments. From the nebulae the systems come ✍ Systems die and are scattered. They whirl, dark and dead through space. A planet rolls through the dust. Friction fires the dust, melts it, sets it moving. The disturbing globe or comet drops life upon the fragments now set in molten motion once again ✍ Another nebula! ✍ In course of time the cooling process

begins. Parts are cast off. Soon a sun and circling train of satellites! ❧ How often may the circle of systems from life, through death, to life again be made? The conclusion is that the Universe itself must complete a circle; must return whence it emanated ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ From the one cell life variegates in large as in small. The end of variety is the return to the one. The end is the beginning. "I am the Alpha and the Omega." We may fall back into our own sun, but that sun will, in time, fall back into a greater, and that again into another, until the primordial Sun is reached. Matter must fall back and back towards the origin thereof and end in the Absolute. Shall we say that it returns & returns and returns until all creation condenses into the mere thought of the Supreme Intelligence? ❧ The number One is the original of all mathematics. Zero is but the figure one bent into a circle. All the figures are but variations of 1 and 0. All life is but variation of the life that is—through Life and Death. The end of all number is return to Unity, to the one bent into "the perfect circle," symbol of quiet and completion ❧ Love conquers death even by death; for

Love is the spirit of which matter is a mere instrument ❧ When the circle is complete all things are absorbed in that whence they sprung or whence they differentiated. Matter has not destroyed itself. Through development, through the retort and alembic of change, it has purified itself and come back to the Supreme, all Spirit ❧ Matter is, as it were, volatilized; all the spirit in it is set free and, through indefinities of purification, the last materiality of matter is transmuted into spirit—as the substance of a rose leaf into the odor thereof or, remoter still, into the thought of the odor of the rose—and Matter is not annihilated, but only changed into its other self, Spirit ❧ It is resolved back into the Idea in which alone it had existence. This is the idea of Nirvana ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ This is not a doctrine of Nothingness, and the end of this law of love, which the German savant is said to have found operating in crystals as hard as this inevitable law of love itself, is not the panacea of "universal suicide." Death is love's attainment of calm, after the mighty circle of struggle has been made. ¶ It would seem, of course, that, if the end of everything is to be annihilation, the

individual might take a short cut to the end, by means of "a tall tree and courage and a rope," might hasten his arrival at the absorption. But the law of love is not the law of self. It is a law understood best in the universal and reaching its full meaning only in bringing the universes and all that they inherit under its sway in utter cessation of strife and attrition; not in annihilation, but in a concentration of all in one perfect peace ❧ ❧ ❧ Nirvana negatives nothing. It brings all discordances and denials to a harmonious positive ❧ It brings Resistance, which is Matter, to Rest, which is the Spirit—to the Rest which is the completion of Motion's infinite circle ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The end, then, is "the death of all desire," after the Universe's riot of desire, after its fulfilment of the law of love. The end, then, is what Schopenhauer suggests, "The denial of the will to live." But this is not a mere coprolalia, a foul necrophilism, a worship of decay and death suggestive of D'Annunzio's books. "The denial of the will to live" is not, necessarily, a denial of the law of love I have tried to explain. Schopenhauer is not the pessimist or nihilist he has been pictured ❧ He conceives

of the Will as the life of the race. Will is his name for force ❧ He pronounces it the "unconscious" origin of things, although we have seen rather that the persistence of life is conscious ❧ He declares Will to be the Idea—that "this whole world is only object in relation to subject, perception of a perceiver; in a word, idea." ❧ This is the Hindu doctrine of reality—as Maya, or illusion. The Idea, for him, is the eternal essence, the "ding an sich," the "thing-in-itself." All is but a mirror of a mighty Mind. "We are thoughts in the dream of Brahm." ¶ The attitude Schopenhauer would advise is resignation, the resignation of the Christian saints. He teaches us not to seek nothingness, nor to evade the pains incident to the working out of the law of love. He insists that this world is nothing. The rest he would attain is not the annihilation of desire, but rather the harmonizing of desires as of "steeds thoroughly broken by the trainer," as a Sanscrit poem has it ❧ This is a doctrine of self-controlled submission to the law, serene in faith that the Law, though in matter manifest as lust, is, in its ultimate, Love fulfilled, which is Peace. The satiety of the Spirit is his Nirvana; a satiety

attainable only thro' the sloughing off of Matter or its resolution into Spirit. "The denial of the will to live," is only the denial of the supremity of value of this life. It looks beyond to "the immitigable end" of effort, of action, of the all-informing Motion—rest ✻ And that is all our greatest Seer has promised. "He giveth his beloved Sleep." ✻ ✻ ✻ A far cry, say you, from the German professor and his discovery of life and sex in crystals? Perhaps ✻ But I had been reading Balzac's *Louis Lambert* the day the discovery was announced. Though the book was written in 1832, it maintained this thesis of life in everything and I thought to show how the French Shakespeare had forestalled, by nearly seventy years, by mere genius, the myopic labors of the German savant who, as reported in the newspapers, wanted five hundred thousand dollars to develop his discovery into some usefulness for mankind ✻ Balzac gave it to us for nothing but his pleasure in giving ✻ ✻ ✻ ✻

HE GREATEST WOMAN POET



Yea, gold is son of Zeus: no rust
Its timeless light can stain;
The worm that brings man's flesh to dust
Assaults its strength in vain:
More gold than gold the love I sing,
A hard, inviolable thing.

Men say the passions should grow old
With waning years; my heart
Is incorruptible as gold,
'T is my immortal part:
Nor is there any god can lay
On love the finger of decay.

—Michael Field.



HERE is a world of pity in the book of Henry Thornton Wharton about Sappho. It is a little book, but wistful and tristful in its endeavor to materialize from the haze and hoar of vanished time, this woman whose name is a synonym of shattered splendors of sublime song, and suggestive of strange sins ❧ All who have studied her broken music conclude with a poignant regret for the perfection hinted at in its incompleteness. Its fragments are like the last, pathetic utterances of one dying, babbling misty memories o' green fields ❧ They are stray, ruined, broken, shreds of light, remembered of the golden morning of the world, and touched with the sadness of the decay whence they have been rescued ❧ ❧ Not more than four hundred lines are all we have of her. Not one perfect song. These fragments are culled from the commentaries of rhetoricians and grammarians, from an allusion, now and then, in some dry disquisition of the classic writers or the rapturous outburst of some of her singing brethren, half admiration, half despair, as when Sophocles exclaims, concerning her verse, "Oh gods, what

love, what yearning, contributed to this." In this little book (London, David Stott, 1885, 1887; John Lane, 1895,) are all these fragments gathered, just as found, and shown, small as they are, to have inspired many a fancy in the greatest poets who have followed, unto our own day. For she is the poet of the poets, their patroness saint. Her song, all faintly heard though it be, rings, a delicate echo, through numberless lovely lyrics, and the piteously brief, but immortally bright, gleams of the glory of her muse illuminate and warm the colder utterances of more material times. ¶ This is what an eminent critic, and himself a poet, thinks of her: "Never before these songs were sung, and never since, did the human soul, in the grip of a fiery passion, utter a cry like hers; and, from the executive point of view, in directness, in lucidity, in that high, imperious, verbal economy which only Nature can teach the artist, she has no equal, and none worthy to take the place of second." So, Mr. Theodore Watts, the friend of the one poet of this day who has caught most of the Sapphic melody and fire—Algernon Charles Swinburne

Twenty-five centuries ago, in the phrase of Lord Byron, "Burning Sappho loved and sung." "During her lifetime Jeremiah began to prophesy, Daniel was carried away to Babylon; Nebuchadnezzar besieged and captured Jerusalem; Solon was legislating at Athens, and Tarquinius Priscus, the fifth king, is said to have been reigning over Rome. She lived before the birth of Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, the religion now professed by, perhaps, almost a third of the whole population of the globe." The fragments of her writings reveal but the faintest adumbrations of her personality. All certainly known of her is that she loved, and told, matchlessly, the woe thereof. She is little more than a sigh suspiring through and adown the centuries ❧ Psappha, as she called herself, is a vaguer entity than Shakespeare. She was the one great woman poet of the world, as he is the great man poet ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Athenaeus, writing about the end of the third century of our era, says that the writings of Sappho were preserved intact, for he says he has "learned completely all the songs, breathing of love, which sweetest Sappho sang." It is almost unaccountable

that poetry held in such high esteem by the highest authorities should have perished utterly, but Christianity destroyed much that it can never replace; even though it claims to have given us better things. One writer says the works of Sappho were burned in the year 1073, at Constantinople and Rome, by Pope Gregory VII., while another maintains they were destroyed by the Byzantine emperors and the poems of Gregory Nazianzen circulated in their stead ✍ But Sappho's name is still sweet on the lips of men, and Gregory Nazianzen is remembered, outside of Roman Catholic hagiography, only for this rumor ✍ Most of her verses are gone with "the laurel, the palms and the paean, the breasts of the nymphs in the brake." ¶ Dear old Herodotus tells us that Sappho's father was named Scamandronymus; but the Father of History was one hundred and fifty years after her and—well, it is preferable to believe Herodotus than to worry and weary ourselves over the seven other names of her father, given in a lexicon of the eleventh century. Seven cities warred for Homer, "the poet." Sappho's seven supposed fathers are, perhaps, merely a little bit of "balance" contrived

by old writers for the story of "the poetess." Her mother's name was Cleis, of whom nothing more is known ❧ She had two brothers, Charaxus and Larichus. There was a mainly mythical third one, Eurygius, of whom nothing is known ❧ Larichus was cup-bearer at Mitylene and, as this was a post attainable only by youths of noble lineage, it is supposed that Sappho was an aristocrat ❧ ❧ ❧ Anent Charaxus there is a story that delights the hearts of little children to this day, in its modern form of Cinderella ❧ So closely, after all, we are knit to the olden time. Charaxus, carrying Lesbian wine to Naucratis, in Egypt, met Doricha, or Rhodopis and ransomed her, because of her beauty, from slavery, for a great sum of money. Rhodopis, or "Rosy-cheek," is likewise, a bone of contention among commentators ❧ But I prefer the story of "Rosy-cheek" that is most fitting to one related to the first "poetess of passion." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ One day Rhodopis was bathing at Naucratis ❧ An eagle, swooping, snatched one of her sandals from the hands of a waiting-woman and bore it away to Memphis. There, King Psammetichus was administering justice, & the flying eagle let fall the sandal.

It fell into the King's lap. The beauty of the sandal and its strange arrival caused the King to have quest made over all the earth to discover the sandal's owner. Rhodopis was found at Naucratis and brought to the King ✍ He married her and, when she died, erected to her memory the third pyramid. There are historians who say this is false. It is better than true. It is "ben trovato." ✍ ✍ ✍ It has also been said that Sappho was married, her husband being one Cercolas, a man of great wealth, who sailed from Andros, and that she had a daughter by him, named Cleis ✍ This is a story invented, probably, by the comic poets, who were wont to satirize the poetess, just as we, to-day, satirize the New Woman. It is certain that allusions to Sappho's husband are most satirical, conveying an indelicate, not to say obscene, inuendo because of her fondness for poetical-amorous omniverousness, so to speak. Amid many conjectures as to the exact age in which she lived, Mr. Wharton inclines to prefer the period between 611 and 592 B. C., as most probable, in view, particularly, of some lines of her own in answer to the poet Alcaeus, who addressed her: "Violet-weaving, pure, soft-

smiling Sappho, I want to say something, but shame deters me." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Another legend is that the poetess was beloved by Anacreon, the poet of love & the grape, centuries before the time of Omar Khayyam. Other lovers, too, she is said to have had—among them Archilochus and Hipponax—but it is believed that the statement was made as an aspersion upon the men so mentioned. The husband of a passionate poetess, to-day, is the butt of ridicule ❧ Anacreon, Mr. Wharton thinks, lived many long years after her and never set eyes upon her ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ How long were her days, or how brief, is not known. In one place she applies to herself the epithet "somewhat old," but this is understood to be used in a sense relative rather than specific. Herodotus would make it appear that she lived to be fifty, but some chronologists have maintained, from all the scant evidence, that she was little more than nineteen ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ She lived at Mitylene, the chief city of the island of Lesbos, in the Aegean Sea, & some historians, to evade the odium of extreme moral decadence in the singer, have invented another Sappho, a

courtesan, to bear the burden of unique infamy attaching to the poetess' name, and even Alcaeus, as we have seen, speaks of her with undisguised belief in her virtue. Lesbos is only known because of her; known to poets and readers of poetry and, shame to say, to specialists in moral degeneration, as distinguishing certain perversities that flourish only in highly civilized communities ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ "Lesbos," says J. Addington Symonds, "the center of culture, was the island of overmastering passions; the personality of the Greek race burned there with a fierce & steady flame of concentrated feeling ✍ The energy which the Ionians divided between pleasure, politics, trade, legislation, science, and the arts, and which the Dorians turned to war and statecraft and social economy, were restrained by the Aeolians within the sphere of individual emotions, ready to burst forth volcanically. Nowhere, in any age of Greek history, or in any part of Hellas, did the love of physical beauty, the sensibility to radiant scenes of nature, the consuming fervor of personal feeling, assume such grand proportions, and receive so illustrious an expression as they did in Lesbos ✍ At first this

passion blossomed into the most exquisite lyrical poetry that the world has known; this was the flower-time of the Aeolians, their brief & brilliant spring. But the fruit it bore was bitter and rotten. Lesbos became a by-word of corruption. The passions, which, for a moment, had flamed into the gorgeousness of Art, burnt their envelope of words and images, remained a mere furnace of sensuality, from which no expression of the divine in human life could be expected." This was the reign of hedonism. The dazzle was succeeded by decay ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧
A further picture of the conditions in Lesbos, which produced Sappho, is drawn from the same author. "Aeolian women were not confined to the harem, like Ionians, or subjected to the rigorous discipline of the Spartans ❧ While mixing freely with male society they were highly educated and accustomed to express their sentiments to an extent unknown elsewhere in history—until, indeed, the present time ❧ The Lesbian ladies formed clubs for the cultivation of poetry and music. They studied the art of beauty, and sought to refine metrical forms and diction. Nor did they confine themselves to

the scientific side of Art. Unrestrained by public opinion, and passionate for the beautiful, they cultivated their senses & emotions and developed their wildest passions." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ All of which may be true in general, but not true of the poetess, tho' she did become, in a debased age, a sort of stock character in the licentious drama ❧ Her infamy is a growth of many years after her death, not justified by any contemporary evidence. "The fervor of her love and the purity of her life," says her biographer, "and the very fact of a woman having been the leader of a school of poetry and music, could not have failed to have been misunderstood by the Greek comedians at the close of the fifth century B. C." ❧ The society and habits of the Aeolians at Lesbos, in Sappho's time, as Mr. Wharton quotes from Bournouf, were in complete contrast to those of the Athenians in the period of their corruption; just as the unenviable reputation of the Lesbians was earned long after the date of Sappho ❧ The Christian writers naturally enough accepted as true the plausible inventions of the Greeks themselves concerning Sappho. It is only fair to her memory

to say that the best authorities, nowadays, vindicate this immortal woman ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Sappho's love for Phaon is a story that has long charmed the world ❧ It may be found in Ovid's Historic Epistle XV, translated by Alexander Pope. Phaon was of miraculous loveliness, but insensible to love—a reactionist, probably, against Lesbian conditions. The legend goes, (for 't is a legend only and much doubted, as are all beautiful stories) that he was a boatman of Mitylene, gifted with beauty by Aphrodite, so that all women fell in love with him ❧ Sapplio loved him, but he would not listen, and in despair she threw herself from the Leucadian rock into the sea. The scientists have destroyed this story, but the unscientific world will not let it die. They have guessed and argued many things, but none so pretty as this story of hopeless longing and death ❧ Addison tells this story, in his usual chaste style, in the *Spectator*, No. 233, November 27, 1711, with a rococo turn to it about Sappho's being metamorphosed into a swan as she leaped from the rock ❧ He says also that Alcaeus, the poet, intended to take the leap for love of Sappho, on the same day, but did not

when he heard of her plunge. Instead, he wrote an ode, his hundred and twenty-fifth. How like a poet—to make his misery into "copy"! But how unpoetical! As unpoetical, almost, as the efforts of the philologists to prove that none of these fine, high things occurred ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ "Sappho," says Wharton, "seems to have been the center of a society in Mitylene, a kind of aesthetic club devoted to the Muses. Around her gathered maidens from even comparatively distant places, attracted by her fame, to study under her guidance all that related to poetry and music; much, as, at a later age, students resorted to the philosophers of Athens." The names of fourteen of her girl-friends and pupils have been preserved. To many of them she addressed poems breathing such passion that one scarcely wonders at the blight upon her fame. Whether her passion was pure or impure must depend upon the purity or impurity of the mind deciding. "To the pure all things are pure." ¶ She was, as the legend goes, beautiful in body and mind ❧ She was small and dark, if we may believe what we read of her. She had "sweetness of expression," as witnesses Alcaeus, although the

commentators will, now and then, translate the Greek for this quality as "with violet locks." This, probably, accounts for a legend that she was red-headed. Of her beauty naught remains but the exquisite charm of her verse, that all poets have not only applauded but imitated. The ancients use constantly the word "beautiful" in referring to her; but that may refer only to her works ❧ Still, the beauty of Lesbian women was proverbial. An ancient drawing of her, used as a frontispiece of Mr. Mosher's edition of *Long Ago*, by Michael Field—being paraphrased elaborations of Sapphic fragments—is so archaic that it suggests nothing of beauty; is, in fact, rather repulsively angular. The picture is taken from a vase of date about 420 B. C. An archaic head of Sappho, on the cover of the same volume, is taken from a vase now in Paris. It is almost impossible not to regard it as a caricature. The best picture of Sappho, according to Mr. Wharton, is an idealized one by Alma Tadema, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1881. An etching therefrom is frontispiece to Mr. Wharton's book, and an examination of it reveals, to the present writer's thinking, an unpleasantly

hard, set masculinity of the features ❧ There is mention of her bright eyes in a very old epigram and elsewhere she is called "the sweet voiced." She was called "the Tenth Muse," "the flower of the Graces." ❧ She was not without honor in her own country. Unfortunately, her perpetuation in art is almost altogether infamous. Of the pictures of her on Greek vases, Mr. Wharton says, "One would feel more content if one had not seen them." Some of them are in the style of unexhibited pictures from Pompeiian walls ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ "Of all the poets of the world," says Symonds, "Sappho is the one whose every word has a peculiar and unmistakable perfume, a seal of absolute perfection and immutable grace. In her art she was unerring." He speaks of her "exquisite rarity of phrase," and only echoes the praise of old commentators. Catullus, say the classicists, is the only poet comparable with her. Sappho's poems were written in the Aeolic dialect, which had a peculiar charm of its own, somewhat, I suppose, as the dialect of cultured Southerners has a charm to most American ears. We find it in fact in the verse of Lanier and even of Timrod, while Maurice

Thompson's last poem was a rendition of two Sapphic fragments and in an earlier long poem he rendered in a Southern setting a great number of these fragments. Aeolic was naively simple, it had no rough breathings; there were no dropping of the "h" sounds, no hardnesses ❧ This made the Sapphic verses deliciously singable in a soft, plaintive fashion and in a high pitch ❧ Her poetry was called melic, that is, honeyed, and as Plato defined it, it was "compounded out of these three things: speech, music, rhythm." Her verses are among the earliest form of what we now know as the song or ballad ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Swinburne has written one poem, *Anactoria*, embodying the Sapphic spirit and sentiment, and in a note thereon he "bears witness how, more than any other's her verses strike and sting the memory in lonely places, or at sea, among all loftier sights and sounds—how they seem akin to fire and air, being themselves 'all air and fire'; other elements there is none in them ❧ Her remaining verses are the supreme success, the final achievement of poetic art." ❧ In *Anactoria*, Swinburne says "he has simply expressed, or tried to express,

the violence of affection between one another which hardens into rage & deepens into despair," and has added thereto "an angry appeal against the supreme mystery of oppressive heaven at that point only where pleasure culminates in pain, affection in anger and desire in despair—the outcome of a foiled and fruitless passion recoiling on itself." All of Swinburne's poetry has this strain. One might think Sappho is reincarnate in him ❧ The Sapphism of Swinburne has kept from him the laurel and the pipe of Malmsey ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ In Wharton's book every fragment of Sappho's writing is preserved and translated literally, as well as given in the best poetic paraphrases extant. These fragments are often mere exclamations, such as "Me thou forgettest," "Or lovest another more than me." ❧ There are hints of descriptions of nature, a line "of golden-sandalled Dawn," a memory of an old orchard, perhaps, words of yearning and sorrow, an echo of a nightingale, the perfume of otherwise forgotten springs ❧ They are wonderful for their perfection of phrase, for their pictorial quality, their simplicity, their direct touch upon the sensibility. No worldly fame rests

upon so little, and is withal so well-founded ❧ The beauty of the remains is ravishing, and from "this pinch in the fingers of scentless and delicate dust" the poets, with aspiring imagination, have vainly tried to conceive what was the whole, perfect body of her work. The sense of evanescence in beauty is nowhere else so poignantly emphasized. All the broken music combines to make a perfect minor paean of pain ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The note of Sappho's fame is found in the "Ode to Aphrodite." ❧ Upon this poem, written to a woman by a woman, are based all those stories of the poet that Mr. Wharton characterizes as "calumnies." This poem has been said to be a perfect description of love, as well as a perfect piece of poetry. A literal translation, Mr. Wharton's, may be given, but it conveys no idea of the poetry or the Greek: ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

"That man seems to me peer of the gods who sits in thy presence, and hears close to him thy sweet speech and lovely laughter; that, indeed, makes my heart flutter in my bosom. For when I see thee but a little, I have no utterance left, my tongue is broken down and straightway a subtle fire has run under my skin; with my eyes I have no sight, my ears ring, sweat pours down and a trembling seizes my body. I am paler than grass and seem in my madness little better than one dead. But I must dare all, since one so poor."

And the lovely music breaks off thus abruptly, exasperatingly, in every fragment left to us, only to bring out more piercingly the beauty of the strain.

GINX'S BABY



N an old book store I found, the other day, a little book that should not have been forgotten ❧ It was written more than thirty years ago, by a man named Jenkins, an Englishman, born in India, and educated, in part, in the United States. The name of the book is *Ginx's Baby; His Birth and Other Misfortunes* ❧ ❧ With the remarkable growth of altruism or humanitarianism in the last thirty years, with the application of sincere sympathy as one of the possible solvents of the mystery of misery, it is strange that this book should have passed from the minds of men. The book is a true satire. That is to say, its irony is exercised for the benefit of mankind. The pessimism of the story, its note of cynical despair, is, in reality, a summons to man to do better by his brother. Underlying its bitterness there is such a gentleness of heart as must uplift the reader's own ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The author has the great gift of humor, which all true pessimists possess, and none more than Schopenhauer. He loves humanity though he scourges it. He loves, above all, the little children, whom

Christ loved, as typifying the heart perfect in innocence ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Somewhat the quality of Dickens is in his method of thought and his turns of expression; but he is not the evident artist that Dickens is. He does not seek opportunity to revel in mere rhetoric ❧ He goes for the heart of his subject and his literary charms are displayed quite incidentally to his progress in that direction ❧ His stylisin does not clog his story or cumber his argument. The result is that he produced a tract of the Church of Man which is a powerful argument for a realization in Man of the Church of Ged. His book is superbly hunan and *Ginx's Baby* deserves immortality with other dream-children of good inen's hearts and minds in story and in song ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Room for *Ginx's Baby* in the gallery of undying children; with Marjorie Fleming, Sir Walter's "bonnie, wee coodlin' doo," with Pater's *Child in the House,* with Ouida's *Bebe,* with Mrs. Burnett's *Fauntleroy,* with Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy,* with all the little ones in the books of Dickens and the poems and stories of Eugene Field! ❧ ❧ The child in literature is something new, compara-

tively. We need more of the effort to understand the child mind, the child heart, the child point of view. It will aid us to develop the child, if once we can enter his world and come into sympathy with his impressions. It will purify ourselves, this fresh, new, beautiful world of the child's; its clear, pure air will wash clean our souls; its innocence of doom will revive our hope. The child is a soul fresh from God's mint. If only we could study it more we might regain, from the contemplation, some of our own lost innocence, and, when we come to die, go to our Maker, like Thackeray's immortal Colonel Newcome, with our hearts "as a little child's." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ But *Ginx's Baby* is not an idyl. It is a tragedy. It breathes the spirit of Malthus, only the spirit is transformed into one of pity for the victim of life rather than one of concern for the preservation of the nation. We are not, in this book, the victim of the baby. The baby is our victim. His story will illustrate the philosophy better than any attempt at interpretation and the humor of the telling only intensifies the tragedy ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ "The name of the father of Ginx's Baby was Ginx.

By a not unexceptional coincidence, its mother was Mrs. Ginx. The gender of Ginx's Baby was masculine." That is the first paragraph of the book, and there you have a hint of the flippant flavor; also a very strong suggestion of Charles Dickens. The hero of the book was a thirteenth child ✍ Ominously humorous! The mother previously had distinguished herself. On October 25th, one year after marriage, Mrs. Ginx was safely delivered of a girl ✍ No announcement of this appeared in the papers ✍ On April 10th, following, "the whole neighborhood, including Great Smith Street, Marsham Street, Great and Little Peter Street, Regent Street, Horseferry Road, and Strutton Ground, was convulsed by the report that a woman named Ginx had given birth to a triplet, consisting of two girls and a boy." The Queen heard of it, for this birth got into the papers, and sent the mother three pounds. Protecting infant industry! And protection, it seems, resulted in over-production; for, in a twelvemonth, there were triplets again, two sons and a daughter. Her majesty sent four pounds. The neighbors protested and began to manifest their displeasure uncouthly, so the Ginx family

moved into Rosemary Street, where the tale of rs. Ginx's offspring reached one dozen ❧ Then nx mildly entered protest ❧ If there were any ore, singles, twins or triplets, he would drown n, her, or them in the water-butt ❧ This was mediately after the arrival of Number Twelve. Here, under the chapter-heading of "Home, weet Home," the author, still reminiscent of Dick- s, but delightfully compact and laconic, describes e miserable dwelling of the Ginx's, with a bitter- ss of humor that mocks the sentiment of Howard yne's song. As a specimen of clean realism, this scription is more effective than anything of la's; for Zola's realism is idealism gone mad. ie squalor of the slum is heightened by the sociations that cling to the name Rosemary. A : of sermonizing upon the responsibility of land- ds for the souls in that slum, and the author verts to Ginx and his family ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Ginx had an animal affection for his wife, that eserved her from unkindness even in his cups." ou thank the author for not succumbing to real- n and making Ginx a brute. Ginx worked hard d gave his wife his earnings, less sixpence, with

which sum he retreated, on Sundays, from his twelve children, to the ale-house, to listen sleepily while ale-house demagogues prescribed remedies for State abuses. He was ignorant of policies and issues; simply one of a million victims of the theories upon which statesmen experiment in legislation and taxation. He was one of many dumb and almost unfeeling "chaotic fragments of humanity" to be hewn into shape in one of two ways: either by "coarse artists seeking only petty profit, unhandy, immeasurably impudent," or by instruction to be made "civic corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace." He was appalled by the many mouths he had to feed. He was touched by his wife's continuous heroism of sacrifice for the children, and he felt, in a dim fashion, something of an intuition of "her unsatisfied cravings and the dense motherly horrors that sometimes brooded over her" as she nursed her infants. She believed that God sends food to fill the mouths He sends. She had been able to get along. She would be able to get along ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Ginx, feeling another infant straw would break his back, determined to drown the straw ❧ Mrs.

Ginx, clinging to Number Twelve, listened aghast. "The stream of her affections, though divided into twelve rills, would not have been exhausted in twenty-four, & her soul, forecasting its sorrows, yearned after that nonentity, Number Thirteen. Ginx sought to comfort her by the suggestion that she could not have any more. But she knew better. ¶ After eighteen months the baby was born ❧ Ginx thought it all out before the event ❧ "He would n't go on the parish. ❧ He could n't keep another youngster to save his life ❧ He would not take charity ❧ There was nothing to do but drown the baby." He must have talked his intentions at the ale-house, for the whole neighborhood watched Mrs. Ginx's "time" with interest. Going home one afternoon, he saw signs of excitement around his door. He entered. He took up the little stranger and bore it from the room ❧ "His wife would have arisen, but a strong power called weakness held her back." Out on the street, with the crowd following him, Ginx stopped to consider. "It is all very well to talk about drowning your baby, but to do it you need two things—water and opportunity." He turned toward Vauxhall Bridge.

The crowd cried "Murder!" ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧
"Leave me alone, nabors," shouted Ginx; "this is my own haby and I 'll do wot I likes with it. I kent keep it an' if I 've got anything I can't keep, it 's best to get rid of it, ain't it? This child 's going over Vauxhall Bridge."
The women clung to his arms and coat-tails. A man happened along. "A foundling? Confound the place, the very stones produce babies."
"It were n't found at all. It 's Ginx's baby," cried the crowd.
"Ginx's baby. Who 's Ginx?"
"I am," said Ginx.
"Well?"
"Well!"
"He 's going to drown it!" came the chorus.
"Going to drown it? Nonsense!" said the officer.
"I am," said Ginx.
"But, bless my heart, that 's murder!"
"No, 't ain't," said Ginx. "I 've twelve already at home. Starvashon 's shure to kill this 'un ❧ Best save it the trouble."
The officer declares this is quite contrary to law and he recites the law, but that does n't affect

Ginx. He fails utterly to see why, if Parliament will not let him abandon the child, Parliament does not provide for the child—for all the other twelve. The officer declares that the parish has enough to do to take care of foundlings and children of parents who can't or won't work. Says Ginx: "Jest so. You 'll bring up bastards and beggars' pups, but you won't help an honest man keep his head above water. This child's head is goin' under water anyhow!" and he dashed for the bridge, with the screaming crowd at his heels ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ A philosopher interposes at this stage with a query as to how Ginx came to have so many children. Of course Ginx has to laugh ❧ The Philosopher urges that Ginx had no right to bring children into the world unless he could feed, clothe and educate them, and Ginx replies that he 'd like to know how he could help it, as a married man. The Philosopher goes over the old, old tale of rationalism in life. Ginx should not have married a poor woman; should not have gone on subdividing his resources by the increase of what must be a degenerate offspring; should not have married at all. ¶ "Ginx's face grew dark. He was thinking of

'all those years' and the poor creature that from morning to night and Sunday to Sunday, in calm and storm, had clung to his rough affections; and the bright eyes and the winding arms so often trellised over his tremendous form, and the coy tricks & laughter that had cheered so many tired hours. He may have been much of a brute, but he felt that, after all, that sort of thing was denied to dogs and pigs." The Philosopher could not answer these thoughts nor the rejoinder question to his own: what is a man or woman to do that does n't marry? And so the argument proceeds, the Philosopher losing ground all the time, because his rationality is based upon changing man's nature, not on making something out of "what 's nateral to human beings." The Act-of-Parliament idea of solving the problem is riddled effectively by a stonemason, who points out that the head-citizen is not so worthy as the heart-citizen. In brief, the Philosopher is routed by the doctrine that love is better than law Ginx proceeds to the river again, but is stopped by a nun who asks for the child He gives the

bundle to her. She uncovers the queer, ruby face and kisses it ❧ After this Ginx could not have touched a hair of the child's head ❧ His purpose dies, but his perplexity is alive. The nun takes the child, and Ginx, in gratitude for her assurance that the child shall not be sent back to him, stands treat for the crowd ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The child's life in the convent is material for some good satiric writing upon the question of his salvation. The picture is absurdly overdrawn, so far as its effectiveness against conventual charity is concerned, but it touches the question of religious bigotry surely and strongly. Indeed, the method of treatment here verges closely upon the Rabelaisian, as in the scene in which the Sisters want to make the sign of the cross upon Mrs. Ginx's breasts before allowing the baby to suck ❧ Mrs. Ginx refused the "Papish idolaters," & the Protestant Detectoral Association is brought to the rescue of the child from superstition ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ A little man with a keen Roman nose—he could scent Jesuits a mile off—took up the cause of the child and it got into court. The matter became a cause celebre. London was in a turmoil over "the

Papal abduction." ❧ The author sketches it all graphically with a convincing fidelity of caricature. The "Sisters of Misery" triumphed. They retained the baby. Then, after attempting to sanctify the baby—a ceremony wholly imaginary & described with a smutch of revolting coarseness—the Sisters send the baby packing back to the Protestant Detectoral Association ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The Protestants had him; but the Dissenters protested against his being given to an Anglican refuge. The scene at the mass-meeting to celebrate young Ginx's rescue from the incubus of a delusive superstition is described with rare appreciation of the foibles of character. The bombast, the cant, the flapdoodle and flubdub, the silly unction of different kinds of preachers are "done to a hair." Five hours the meeting raged, and at last a resolution that the Metropolitan pulpit should take up the subject and the churches take up a collection for the baby on the next Sunday having been passed, the meeting adjourned—forgetting all about the baby. A strange woman took the baby "for the sake of the cause." He had been provided with a splendid layette by an enthusiastic Protes-

tant Duchess ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧
¶ "Some hours later, Ginx's Baby, stripped of the Duchess' beautiful robes, was found by a policeman, lying on a doorstep in one of the narrow streets not an hundred yards" from the meeting place. "By an ironical chance he was wrapped in a copy of the largest daily paper in the world." ¶ The baby was recovered and the preachers "praught." The collections and the donations and subscriptions amounted to thirteen hundred and sixty pounds, ten shillings and three and one-half pence. How the money was spent is shown in a deliciously absurd balance-sheet ❧ Not quite one hundred and nine pounds were spent upon the baby ❧ The other money was wasted in various forms and styles of "guff." "In an age of luxury," says the baby's biographer, "we are grown so luxurious as to be content to pay agents to do our good deeds, but they charge us three hundred per cent for the privilege." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧
How the police found and treated the baby is a chapter full of subtle sarcasm, leading up to the still more sarcastic portrayal of the way the baby fared in the hands of the Committee appointed to

take care of him. He was like to be torn to pieces between contending divines. The debates in Committee are illuminating expositions of different varieties of bigotry. His body was almost forgotten while the philanthropists were trying to decide what to do with his soul ❧ Few of the reverend gentlemen "would be content unless they could seize him when his young nature was plastic and try to imprint on immortal clay the trade-mark of some human invention." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Twenty-three meetings of the Committee were held and unity was as far off at the last as at the first. The Secretary asked the Committee to provide money to meet the baby's liabilities, but the Committee instantly adjourned and no effort afterwards could get a quorum together. The persons who had charge of the foundling began to dun the Secretary and to neglect the child, now thirteen months old. They sold his clothes and absconded from the place where they had been "framing him for Protestantism." ❧ As a Protestant question Ginx's Baby vanished from the world ❧ ❧ ❧ Wrapped in a potato sack, the baby was found one night on the pavement exactly over a line

dividing two parishes. The finder was a business man. He noted the exact spot where the child lay and took it to—the other parish. He would not be taxed for its support. The parish guardians would not accept the child. As the man who found the child was a guardian of the other parish, he was trying to foist a bastard—perhaps his own—upon their parish. A motion was made to "get rid of the brat." "A church warden, who happened to be a gentleman," suggested the services of a lawyer. The brutality of the guardians as they examined and discussed the child is depicted with terrible power. The lawyer says the Board will have to take the baby pro tem or "create an unhappy impression on the minds of the public." ⁂ ⁂ ⁂ "Damn the public!" said Mr. Stink, a dog-breeder member of the Board, thus antecedently plagiarizing an American millionaire. The parish accepts the baby under protest and a formal written protest addressed to the baby, name unknown, is pinned on the potato sack. The two parishes go to law about the child. Neither wishes to take care of it. At Saint Bartemeus' workhouse, a notice was posted forbidding the officials, assistants and

servants to enter the baby's room, pendente lite, or to render it any service or assistance on pain of dismissal. The baby was nigh starvation. The master of the workhouse stealthily fed him on pap, saying as he did so, "Now, youngster, this is without prejudice, remember! I give you due notice—without prejudice." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The baby became ill. A nobleman discovered him and laid his case before a magistrate. The papers made a sensation of the baby's case. There was a terrific hullabaloo. An inquiry was held ❧ The guardians became furious. "The reports of their proceedings read like the vagaries of a lunatic asylum or the deliberations of the American Senate." They discharged the kindly master. The baby was locked in a room. Food was passed to him on a stick ❧ The inquiry was denounced and the bewildered public gnashed its teeth at everybody who had anything to do with, or say of, Ginx's Baby. "At last St. Bartemeus' parish had to keep him, and the guardians, keeping carefully within the law, neglected nothing that could sap little Ginx's vitality, deaden his instincts, derange moral action, cause hope to die within his infant breast

almost as soon as it was born." Every pauper was to them an obnoxious charge to be reduced to a minimum or nil ❧ The baby's constitution alone prevented his reduction to nil ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The bill of costs against St. Bartemeus was sixteen hundred pounds. Just as it was taxed, one of the persons who had deserted Ginx's Baby was arrested for theft ❧ The Baby's clothes, given by the Duchess, were found in this person's possession. She confessed all about the baby and so the guardians traced the baby's father and delivered to Ginx, through an agent, the famous child, with the benediction—"There he is; damn him!" ❧ ❧ ❧ Mrs. Ginx could n't recognize the baby ❧ His brothers and sisters would have nothing to do with him. Ginx denied him. Ginx took the baby out one night, left it on the steps of a large building in Pall Mall, and slunk away out of the pages of "this strange, eventful history." ❧ The baby piped. The door of the house, a club, opened and the baby was taken in. It was the Radical Club, but it was as conservative as could be in its reception of the waif. It was only a perfunctory kindliness that the club gave him shelter. The Fogey

Club heard of the baby and bethought itself of making campaign material of him ❧ The Fogies instructed their "organ" to dilate upon the disgraceful apathy of the Radicals toward the foundling. The Fogies kidnaped the baby; the Radicals stole him back ❧ The baby was again a great "question." However, other questions supervened, although it was understood that Sir Charles Sterling was "to get a night" to bring up the case of Ginx's Baby in Parliament ❧ Associations were formed in the metropolis for disposing of Ginx's Baby by expatriation or otherwise. A peer suddenly sprung the matter by proposing to send the baby to the Antipodes at the expense of the Nation. The question was debated with elaborate, stilted stultitude and the noble lord withdrew his motion. ¶ The baby tired of life at the clubs. He borrowed some clothes, some forks, some spoons, without leave, and then took his leave. No attempt was made to recover him. He was fifteen. "He pitted his wits against starvation." He found the world terribly full everywhere he went. He went through a career of penury, of honest and dishonest callings, of captures, escapes and recaptures, impris-

onments and other punishments. ¶ Midnight on Vauxhall Bridge! ❧ The form of a man emerged from the dark and outlined itself against the haze of the sky. There was a dull flash of a face in the gloom. The shadow leaped far out into the night. Splash! ❧ "Society which, in the sacred names of Law & Charity, forbade the father to throw his child over Vauxhall Bridge, at a time when he was alike unconscious of life & death, has at last driven him over the parapet into the greedy waters." ❧ ❧ The questions of the book I have condensed here are as alive to-day as are thousands of other Ginx's babies in all our big cities. While philanthropists and politicians, priests and preachers, men and women theorize about the questions, the questions grow "more insoluble." What is to be done, is the first question. How it is to be done is a question which is secondary and its discussion is useless until the first is settled. Too much State drove Ginx's Baby into the Thames ❧ What 's everybody's business is nobody's business. If the uncountable babies of innumerable Ginxs are to be aided, some one must aid them for the mere pleasure there is in loving-kindness. ¶ A baby is

a human being, not a problem. A baby can't be explained away by pure reason, because he did not come by that route. Love brought him here and only Love can nourish him to the fullness of growth in soul and mind. True, many come who, seemingly, were better drowned like surplus puppies or kittens. But who shall select those to survive? Grecian wisdom once attempted to improve on "natural selection" and Greece is the ghost of a vanished glory ✍ Why should n't Ginx have drowned his baby—or himself—before the multiplication in the result of which the baby was a unit? ¶ I don't know why, unless because there is, in every life, even the most successful, apparently, enough of unhappiness and failure and emptiness to justify, at a given moment, a "leap in the dark." This logic of suicide would annihilate the race. The unwelcome baby may be the best. Life must try us all ✍ Those who do not stand the test disappear. Their own weaknesses eliminate them. Myriads must fail that a few may succeed a very little ✍ ✍ Ginx at least owed his baby reparation for bringing about the first misfortune, his birth. Ginx was a sophist. His mercy of murder for the child was

regard for himself. His reasoning was right. His heart was full of self and, ergo, wrong. Ginx surrendered before the fight was fought. So did the baby. There is nothing for it, my good masters, but a fight to a finish. Yes, even though Birnam Wood come to Dunsinane, still must we fight, like Macbeth, and all the more valiantly for that we know our sins are heavy upon our heads & hearts. "Courage, my comrades, the devil is dead," said Denys of Burgundy. But there is a greater courage my comrades: it is fighting the devil who never dies, until the devil in us all shall die. This is not the courage of despair, but of hope and faith that by conquest of ourselves shall Evil be slain, though only in a fair, far time and by crores of deaths of us and of our kind. That is why the book *Ginx's Baby* is false in its demonstration that it had been better if the "hero" had been thrown off the bridge at first. Its philosophy is the philosophy of the "quitter." The only courage is to endure ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ And what shall we do for the Ginx's babies so multitudinous in their misery? ❧ These, too, we must endure. It were well to love them a little as

babies and not to discuss them so much as "questions." It were well if there were a little more individual charity; a good deal less of the kind described by Boyle O'Reilly as conducted "in the name of a cautious, statistical Christ." If every one would do a little good for the poor, the unfortunate, the afflicted, the sum of all our doings would be a great deal of good Take a penny from every person in the United States and give it to one man and he has seven hundred thousand dollars Every Ginx's baby in any land can be helped somewhat, and Ginx himself must do his share to the full limit of his capacity for doing. We cannot save them all; cannot make their lives successes. Success is the sum of many failures. A million seeds must die that one rose may bloom. You or I may be the means, in part, of saving one child from the plunge of Vauxhall Bridge or thro' the gallows-trap. And one is worth while. That is the way to "look out for number one." Individual effort for individuals is the true humanitarianism. Lift up the person nearest you who is in need of assistance. Bend to him and feel your own stature increase by so much as you uplift him

THE TWO EAGLETS

MAUDE ADAMS AND SARA BERNHARDT

HERE is a woman of the stage whose every movement, glance, tone, smile or tear, proclaims that woman is a thing for honor, not vile use. There is no suggestion of musk arising at the mention of her name ❧ There is no association of her in thought with absinthe or creme-de-menthe ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The tragic touch is on her face, but it is not the tragedy of the fleshly passion, nor the worse tragedy of chill genius simulating passion. There is that in her face that makes you glad she is not a beauty. It is a yearning face, soft, pure, innocent, yet of an unearthly sapiency withal. With some such face the Blessed Damozel might have looked out from heaven, the while the holy fervor in her breast "made the bar she leaned on warm." 'T is a holy wistfulness in her glance, and the tristfulness of her voice is of little children crying, lonely, lost in some daedal night. Her smile is full of a charm of sadness that is older than the world —the sadness of unfinished things, of foiled hopes, of vanished dreams. Just a shade here, there, on her lip or cheek, and the smile transmutes to

tears ✍ Just a hint of a tone here, there, in her laughter, and it is the cry of youth whose soul is torn out with its illusions and trampled on by Fact and Fate. Is she playful—it is with a melancholy undertone. In I know not what manner this woman —perhaps I should call her girl—never fails to make me think of old roses, old songs, old landscapes, that I saw and knew under circumstances pleasant, but now sad in remembrance ✍ ✍ ✍ Something about her ever brings back to mind the fact that there is in life and in memory a "bitterness of things too sweet." ✍ There 's an ancient atmosphere about her, as if she were some creature many million years young, joyous while endeavoring to hide some wondrous secret. Her simplicity is so rare and fine that you scarce can help feeling that she is untrammeled by even original sin ✍ The pathetic note about her is the same thing we feel when we see a "little white hearse go glimmering by." ✍ Youth and eld are strangely intimated in her glance. She is a child —and yet the antique flavor is in her childishness, as if she had somehow come down to us untouched, untainted by time from some wide, wild, open,

woodland place of the classical world, wherein one walking might easier meet a god or a goddess than a man or a woman ❧ This feeling that you have before her, under her spell, is an eerie one, but not unpleasant; not more so, in any event, than is the emotion that arises at remembrance of especially delectable days in one's own vanished youth. I care not whether she be in one of her histrionic flights—always there is that quaint suggestion of her intimate relationship to something young and sweet and pure, a great while since, a long, long time ago. The personal charm is all-pervasive. It is child-like, and yet so worldly-wise and worldly-weary. It is essentially spiritual—a quality I recollect never to have felt or observed in any other woman of the foothights. She reminds you of the woman you love—and of that woman as you most love to think of her,—as a little girl, though with, too, her later womanly charms. ¶ This is n't genius—say you? ❧ Well, what is genius, anyhow? Whatever it be, Maude Adams lifts you out of your work-a-day self into your better self, makes you forget and remember and dream & live in a hidden, inner world of romance.

Rostand's poetry falls as naturally from her lips as Shakespeare's from *Rosalind's* or *Imogen's*. As the *Duc de Reichstadt* she is as bewitchingly elf-like as in her impersonation of *Babbie*. There is a pagan freshness in her movements and words, a sincerity of abandon that is of the early world. And on her, mysteriously, is the doom of things too fair. In her indecision, in her passionateness of protest against her own weakness, in her anguished recognition of herself as a sacrifice, immolated in expiation of glory, in that wild scene of the smashed mirror as in the unearthly vision on the field of Wagram, we find the primal emotions of the world bodied forth, paler and weaker than we find them, perhaps, in *Hamlet* or *Lear*, but as they well might express themselves in a boy whose great soul burned out his puny body. Over all the storm and stress lingers the beauty that the Great White Plague so often vouchsafes its victim. The glamour that coming death casts upon a fading world plays around all the tragedy. It is the assassination of youth by Fate, but tempered with whiffs of Parma violets, and the thunders of cannon translated into the humming

of the imperial bees. The episode of the tryst—softly—it is as pure in her treatment as the old tale of *Aucassin and Nicolete*. The sense of a strange purification steals over one, as the boy advances to the ordained end. The drama suggests the clearness of eyes that have but recently known tears, the clearness of a summer day after an afternoon rain. And her voice carries unique tones, tones that might be in sorrow and anguish the wailings of those infants a span long, which Jonathan Edwards was glad to think were multitudinous in hell—tones, again, that might be the joy of the trees and flowers in growing, or the murmur of streams of their joy of flowing ⁂ The fire of her is the flame that burns in the autumn leaf—not fierce, but ineffably, warmly tender. It is a fire that seems to feed upon tears. It is a dream-fire, in some of its aspects. And the piteous ineffectiveness of the genius of the Eaglet! It *is* genius, but in the grasp of death. The very nobility of the aspiration is conveyed with a second intention of irony. The Adams *L'Aiglon* is as beautifully sad, as, let us say, the minor legends of of the Arthurian cycle—and as far away ⁂ The

remoteness of the Eaglet's dreams, the unworldliness that futilizes his ambition, the supreme idealization of his father and the angelic intent of his desire for a throne—all these things show the Adams Eaglet to be, as undoubtedly he is, a purely poetical conception. It is not real, not true. It is all a splendid, poetic vision. The real *Duc de Reichstadt* is not portrayed by Maude Adams, not a real boy even. What she gives us is *L'Aiglon*, the creature of Rostand's fancy in its most exalted mood of worshipful idealization of a mere scrap of story. ¶ All the poetry of youth, all the poetry of the failure to make dream mate with deed, all the poetry of piteous legend twining around a mighty name, all the poetry of what Napoleon was, filtered thro' Austria and Spain and the Escurial, all the poetry of the dynamic diluted by contemplative doubt, all the poetry of a child-of-fancy set in a colorful reproduction of great history—all this is Maude Adams' Eaglet ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ It is great—great in its pureness, in its irony, in its flashes of flickering failing fire, in its implied reproach of the great legend it glorifies, in its totality of impression upon us that all is vanity

and glory, perhaps, more vain than aught else. ¶ Maude Adams *is* the Eaglet because she is of the spirit allied to the genius of Rostand. She is of the child-kind and woman-kind, unsullied by the blasphemies of French artistry, in search of experience to enable interpretation of passion. Maude Adams' art comes from her soul, not from bodily experience. She creates a world for herself, and it is a world beautiful with the beauty of the soul from which it springs. She is spring violets and droning bees, and dreams and tender histories of motherless bairns. And so with the mother-heart of the girl, who is maternal without understanding her instinct, she enters into the heart and soul of *L'Aiglon* and lives him for us in a few all-too brief hours, just as that pale, piteous boy lives in the red-golden poetry of Rostand.

S A R A



HE is with us again—the most wonderful woman in the world—the Bernhardt—anarch and artist. Think of it! She is the one conspicuous woman to whom everything is forgiven. She is the one woman who has withstood the caricaturist, the satirist, the lampoonist. She is the one woman who has been allowed to grow old without irreverent notice. She has defied all the conventions, and the conventions have obliterated themselves in her behalf. Her sins are peccadilloes. Tradesmen have been honored that she owed them money. She has given immortality to nonentities, for that she loved them for a day. She has rehabilitated the courtesan in the estimation of the public. She has deliberately glorified passion as passion for years upon years. She has devoted a life to emphasizing the panther in the gentler sex. Admirably, too, has she played the charlatan. The secret of advertising has been hers. Her love-affairs have been the best sort of puffery for her. She has been a stupendous pretender to many things—to mysticism, to scholarship, to political intrigue, even to virtue. She has multi-

plied her genius by her pretension until her fame has filled the Seven Climes. She has asserted her ego so insistently that, for her sake, all standards were abolished save those of her own making. She has been a queer admixture, as she has designedly projected herself upon her time, of the virago, the vestal and the vampire. She has been willful and wicked and winsome and wise, but always with the public in the tail of her eye ✍ She has been always opulent, in the way of her race, and yet parsimonious while spendthrift. She has had no respect for anything but the press. Her art—why her art is nothing,—but herself ✍ She is supremely clever. She has always maintained in Paris a staff of friends who have been telling us this for so long that we must believe it ✍ ✍ ✍ The Bernhardt has brains and, perhaps, some heart, though she calls a son an *accident d' amour* ✍ The Bernhardt has been the best bamboozler of the public that her sex has produced. Well did Marie Colombier characterize her when she christened her *Sara Barnum,* in a mythical biography, now forgotten. The people like to be fooled. Therefore Bernhardt fooled them. Years

agone she had her photograph taken, sleeping in a coffin. She has claimed to be a painter. She even professes piety, Christian piety, tho' in her heart the law of Moses has not been superseded. Yes; she hesitates not to affect the saintly, and at the same time when asked what she would suggest for an Eleventh Commandment, she said, with the weary air of one who had broken them all, "there are ten too many already." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Sara has been ever daring. Her daring has borne her to the heights of glory. She has never hesitated to do that which boomed her. She even had Jean Richepin show the scratches she gave him in love-spats, to his friends in the Paris cafes. She had Richepin, her actual lover, appear upon the stage and act as a stage lover in *Nana Sahib*, when all Paris knew the standing of the pair and that the acting was the real thing ❧ She has quarreled with everybody, and has made every quarrel count as an "ad." ❧ She has defied the French government. She has even defied French critics who wanted more subsidy than she would or could disgorge ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Men who have sworn over their absinthe or bock

that she was as ugly as sin have, within the hour, declared her more beautiful than Cypris ✍ Men have said of her art that it was *sirop de cadavre* —juice of the corpse—our "rotten" raised to the nth power—and within the fortnight have written of her such raptures that the writers seemed evaporating in voluptuous ecstasies. Men professedly hating her have groveled at her feet. Men have loved her and were silent. All except Rochefort, whose *mot,* when challenged by her son, is immortal. She has been said to be the meanest of misers, and these who have said so have said at other times that she was benevolence incarnate ✍ ✍ Votaress of Love, she has been accused of loving nobody but Love, and that Love, herself. She is an enigma. She has admitted this, but only to the extent of saying she is an enigma to herself ✍ She says that in all her great roles she is at once the character portrayed and her own self. She professes to disdain effort in her effects, and yet she boasts that she works like a slave ✍ But the contrasts and antitheses in her character might be enumerated *ad infinitum,* and evermore the impression would recur that these contrasts and

contradictions are Bernhardt. You can't explain her ✍ She simply *is,* as Elbert Hubbard said of Shakespeare. You can not always tell what it is she does on the stage. You never can tell how she does it. Never have I seen her on the stage that I did n't think involuntarily of Pater's rhapsody over Da Vinci's *Mona Lisa,* or after the play was over, of the head of Medusa. There 's an esoteric atmosphere of the *macabre* about her that seems *revenant*—something that has come back to earth after seeing hidden things. You 'll note it in everything she does, from *Phaedre* to *L'Aiglon,* even in her *Hamlet,* in which she comes perilously close to burlesque. This little preter-human flavor about her is what has captured the world,—that and the lithe orientalism, semitism of her, the something luscious that suggests to you the cedars of Lebanon, the lips that drop of honeycomb. She is rapt in concern with her inscrutable self. Her voice—it calls to you from strange waste places outside the world ✍ It mumbles things deifying all that civilization now deems diabolic ✍ At times, in passion, it is like the inarticulate cry of wild beasts. Again it is the sleep-speech of one satiate of passion

yet restlessly dreaming of new, weird, immane amours ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ She speaks to us of love, ever of love as the fundamental thing of life, but it is of that love that the world has worn itself sad trying to forget, the love that was the one thing in the pagan world, love that ignored soul, love that no one now dares write about but Pierre Louys. It is this absence of soul that makes her *Reichstadt,* like her *Hamlet,* uncannily unsatisfying to us. We are not pagans, like her adoring Parisians ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ But she is she, and we must accept her. Those who most strenuously deny her, thereby assert her. She is as new and as old as dawn ❧ She is the negation of herself and the affirmation of all blasphemies against her. She is the accomplice of the World, the Flesh and the Devil ❧ She is Intellect and Passion intercorrupting each other and combining to cast a corpse-light over Art. She scorns the mob she caters to. She makes light of her own genius. She commercializes her idealism as grossly as if she were a money-lender. She idealizes her commercialism, as if she were Mark Hanna. She is great, but so confusedly polyhedric

as to prevent complete conception of her personality ❧ She is tender and hard, wise and foolish, sincere and deceptive, a saint of sin and a sinner in the name of piety ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ She is a woman whose womanliness is huge, misshapen vast, without circumference, shifting-centered, elemental. She inspires at once reverence, affection, terror. *Ave Faustina Imperatrix!*

A GIPSY GENIUS

IN this world men are the only things worth while, and I propose to write briefly of a man who, though living in these our own so-called degenerate days, would have found a perfect setting in "the spacious times of great Elizabeth." He would have been a worthy companion of Raleigh, half-pirate & half-poet. He had in his time but one soul-kinsman, & that man was at once England's shame and glory, embalmed forever in the ominous word Khartoum ❧ ❧ ❧ Sir Richard Burton was the last of the English "gentlemen adventurers." He came late into the world, but he had in him the large, strong qualities that have made the English masters of the world. He was a Gipsy Genius, though his utmost research could never find more clew to a Romany ancestry than the fact that there was a Gipsy family of the same name. He looked the Gipsy in every feature, and he had upon him such an urging restlessness as no man ever had, save perhaps the Wandering Jew. His life was an epic of thought, of investigation and of adventure. The track of his wanderings laced the globe. He

loved "the antres vast and deserts idle," and he had the flair, the hound-scent, as it were, to find the hearts of strange peoples ❧ His "Life," by his wife, is the most interesting biography since that of Boswell, and strangely enough it is, like the famous *Johnson*, as interesting for its revelation of the biographer as for its portrayal of the subject ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Burton's wife was the lovingest slave who ever wedded with an idol. The story of their courtship is ridiculous almost to the verge of tragic. As a girl, a Gipsy woman named Burton told Isabel Arundell that she would marry one of the palmist's name, would travel much, and receive much honor. One day at Boulogne she was on the ramparts with companions, when she saw Burton. She describes him rapturously; tall, thin, muscular, very dark hair, black, clearly-defined, sagacious eyebrows, a brown, weather-beaten complexion, straight Arab features, a determined looking mouth and chin ❧ And then she quotes a clever friend's description, "that he had the brow of a god, the jaw of a devil." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ His eyes "pierced you through and through."

When he smiled he did so "as though it hurt him." He had a "fierce, proud, melancholy expression," and he "looked with contempt at things generally." He stared at her, and his eyes looked her through and through. She turned to a friend, and said in a whisper, "That man will marry me." The next day they walked again. This time this man wrote on the wall, "May I speak to you?" She picked up the chalk and scrawled, "No, mother will be angry." A few days later they met in a formal manner and were introduced. She started at the name Burton. Her rhapsodies on the meeting are refreshing. One night he danced with her She kept the sash and the gloves she wore that night as sacred mementos Six years passed before she saw her Fate again. He had been in the world though and she had kept track of his actions. In 1856 she met him in the Botanical Gardens, "walking with the gorgeous creature of Boulogne—then married." They talked of things, particularly of Disraeli's *Tancred*. He asked her if she came to the Gardens often. She said that she and her cousin came there every morning to study He was there next morning,

composing poetry to send to Monckton-Milnes. They walked and talked, and did it again and again. "I trod on air," wrote the lady in her old, old age. Why not? She was one woman who had found a real hero ✍ He asked her if she could dream of giving up civilization, and of going to live there if he could obtain the Consulate of Damascus. He told her to think it over. She said, "I don't want to think it over—I 've been thinking it over for six years, ever since I first saw you at Boulogne on the ramparts. I have prayed for you every day, morning and night ✍ I have followed all your career minutely. I have read every word you ever wrote, and I would rather have a crust and a tent with you than to be queen of all the world. And so I say now, yes, yes, yes." She lived up to this to the day of his death, & long after it. ¶ In 1859 she was thinking of becoming a Sister of Charity. She had not heard from Burton in a long time ✍ He had left her without much ceremony to search for the sources of the Nile with Speke. Speke had returned alone. Burton remained at Zanzibar, and she says, "I was very sore" because Burton according to report was not think-

ing of coming home to his love, but of going for the source of the Nile once more. She called on a friend ✍ The friend was out. She waited, and while waiting Burton popped in upon her. He had come to see the friend to get her address ✍ Her description of the meeting is a pitifully exact reproduction of her emotions over the reunion. He was weakened by African fevers ✍ Her family, ardent Catholics, opposed the idea of marriage. The lovers used to meet in the Botanical Gardens whence she often had to escort him, fainting, to the house of sympathetic friends, in a cab ✍ He was poor. He was out of favor with the government. Speke had preempted all the honors of the expedition. But she was happy ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ Then, one day in April, 1860, she was walking with some friends, when "a tightening of the heart" came over her that "she had not known before." She went home and said to her sister, "I am not going to see Richard for some time." Her sister reassured her. "No, I shall not," she said. "I don't know what is the matter." A tap came at the door, and a note was put in her hand. Burton was off on a journey to Salt Lake City to investi-

gate Mormonism. He would be gone nine months, then he would come back to see if she would marry him. He returned about Christmas, 1860. In the latter part of January they were married, the details of the affair, being appropriately unconventional, not to say exciting ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The marriage was practically an elopement. Lady Burton's description of the event, & of every event in their lives ever after, discloses an idolatry of the man that was almost an insanity. She reveals herself a helpmate with no will but her husband's, no thought that was not for and of him ❧ She annihilated herself as an individuality, and she has left in her own papers a set of "Rules For a Wife," that will make many wives, who are regarded as models of devotion, smile contemptuously at her. She was utterly happy in complete submission to his will ❧ She describes how she served him almost like an Indian squaw ❧ She packed his trunks, was his amanuensis, attended to the details of publishing his books, came or went as he bade, suffered long absence in silence, or accompanied him uncomplainingly on long journeys of exploration, was proud when he hyp-

notized her for the amusement of his friends. ¶ One can but feel deeply sorry for her, for with all her servility, she was a woman of the finer order of mind. The pity of her worship grows as the reader of his life, and hers, realizes how little return in demonstrative affection she received as the reward of her vast and continuous lavishment of love. She strikes me in this as a strange blend of the comic and the tragic. The world neglected Burton. He almost deserved it; so great a sacrifice as his wife's consecration of her life to him would compensate for the loss of anything. You admire it; but you catch yourself suspecting that this consecration must have been at times an awful bore to him. He was unfaithful to her, it is said, with ethnological intent, in all the tribes of the earth. He had no morals to speak of. He had no religion, having studied all. He was a pagan beyond redemption, though his wife maintained he was a Catholic ❧ Unfortunately for her his masterpiece refutes her overwhelmingly ❧ ❧ ❧ He wrote the most remarkable poem of the last forty years, one that is to be classed only with Tennyson's *In Memoriam,* and the *Rubaiyat* of

Omar Khayyam. By this poem, and probably by the revelation of the love he excited in one woman, he will live. This poem expresses himself and his conclusions after years spent in wandering, fighting, studying languages, customs and religions. To understand the man and his poem we must understand what he did, and since the time of the Old Romance no man surpassed him in "deeds of derring-do." He was a modern, a very modern Knight of the Round Table. He was the possessor of innumerable, abstruse and outlandish accomplishments. He was a scientist, a linguist, a poet, a geographer, a roughly clever diplomat, a fighter, a man with a polyhedric personality that caught and gave something from and to every one. And he died, dissatisfied, at Trieste, in 1890, at the age of sixty-nine, and Swinburne sang a dirge for him that was almost worth dying for What he did is hard to condense into an article. I can do no more than skim over his career, and make out a feature here and there He was an unstudious youth. He was not disciplined. He grew as he might, and he absorbed information at haphazard from any book he found to his liking, or

any man he met. He went to Oxford after years in France, Italy and elsewhere, but he was a sort of intellectual Ishmael. He studied things not in the curriculum. He plunged into Arabic and Hindustani, and was "rusticated." He cared nothing for the classics, yet he left a redaction of Catullus that is a splendid exposition of that singer's fearful corruption, and of his art withal. He entered the Indian Army, and he became so powerful, though a subordinate, that he was repressed. His superiors feared that in him they would find another Clive or Hastings. Then he joined the Catholic Church, but he joined many a Church thereafter to find its hidden meaning. He was trusted, to a limited extent, by Sir Charles Napier, and he so insinuated himself with the natives that he was one of them, and sharer of their mysterious powers. Kipling has pictured him, under the name of "Strickland," as an occultly powerful personage in several of his stories. He was close to the Sikh war, and in disguise he mingled with the hostile natives until he knew their very hearts. His pilgrimage to Mecca was a feat that startled the world. He was the first "infidel" to kiss the Kaaba.

To do this he had to become a Mohammedan, and to perform almost hourly minute ceremonials, in which, had he failed of perfection, he would have been torn to pieces. His book on this journey is a narration that displays the deadly cold quality of his courage, and, indeed, a stupendous conscienceless in the interest of science. Next we find him in the Crimea in the thick of things, and always in trouble. He said that all his friends got into trouble, and Burton was usually "agin' the government." It was after the Crimea that he met the lady who became his remarkable wife in the remarkable manner I have sketched. Then he went off to discover the sources of the Nile, and with Speke navigated Lake Tanganyika. He knew he had not discovered the source, and he wanted to try again, but he and Speke quarreled and pamphleteered against each other. Burton, deficient in money, and in sycophancy, was discredited for a time, although now his name is immortal in geography as a pioneer of African travel. We have seen how he left his betrothed to study the Mormons, and he studied them more closely than his wife's book intimates, for she everything

extenuated and ignored for her godlike Richard. ¶ After his experiences of marriage in Mormondom, undertaken it now seems in a desire to ascertain if polygamy were not better for him than monogamy, he returned to London and was married, despite the objections of Isabel Arundell's Catholic family. The lot of the couple was poverty, although now & then thoughtful friends invited them to visit, and they accepted to save money. After a long wait he was appointed Consul at Fernando Po, on the West African Coast. This was a miserable place, but Burton made it lively; he disciplined the negroes, and he made the sea-captains fulfill their contracts under threat of guns ✍ He went home, and then went back to Fernando Po, and undertook delicate dealings with the King of Dahomey, and explored the west coast ✍ He went to Ireland, but Ireland was too quiet for him, but he found that there were Burtons there, which accounted to himself for much in himself. After that he went to Brazil as Consul at Santos, Sao Paulo, another "jumping-off" place. He explored. He found rubies, and he obtained a concession for a lead mine for others. He met

there the Tichborne claimant, and invented a carbine pistol. He visited Argentina. All this time he was writing upon many things, or having his wife take his dictation. She went into the wilds, down into the mines, everywhere with him. Next he was transferred to Damascus, where his honesty got him into trouble, & his wife's Catholicity aroused fierce sentiment against him & He went into Syria, and he created consternation among the corrupt office-holders in Asia Minor. One can scarcely follow his career without dizziness. To oblige a friend who wanted a report on a mine, he went to Iceland, and came back to take the Consulship at Trieste. He went back to India and into Egypt, & then returned to Trieste to die. He wrote pamphlets, monographs, letters and books about everything he saw and every place he visited. He had information exact and from the fountain head about innumerable things: religions, races, ruins, customs, languages, tribal genealogies, vices, geology, archaeology, paleontology, botany, politics, morals, almost everything that was of human interest and value, and besides all this, he was familiar with Chaucer's vocabulary, with recondite

learning about Latin Colloquialisms, and read with avidity everything from the *Confessions of Saint Augustine* to the newspapers. He wrote a *Book of the Sword* that is the standard book on that implement for the carving of the world. His translation of the *Arabian Nights* is a Titanic work, invaluable for its light upon Oriental folk-lore, and literal to a degree that will keep it forever a sealed book to the Young Person. His translation of Camoens is said to be a wonderful rendition of the spirit of the Portuguese Homer. His Catullus is familiar to students, but not edifying. He wrote a curious volume on Falconry in India, and a manual of bayonet exercise & He collated a strange volume of African folk-lore. He translated several Brazilian tales & He translated Apuleius' *Golden Ass*. And he had notes for a book on the Gipsies, on the Greek Anthology and Ausonius. The Burton bibliography looks like a catalogue of a small library. All the world knows about his book, *The Scented Garden,* which he translated from the Persian & which, after his death, his wife burned rather than permit the publication of its naked naturalism. It was in the same vein as his *Arabian*

Nights & contained much curious comment upon many things that we Anglo-Saxons do not talk about save in medical society meetings and dog-Latin ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ ﷺ When such a man sat down to write a poem embodying his view of "The Higher Law," what could have been expected but a notable manuscript? With his poem, the *Kasidah,* we shall now concern ourselves. It purports to be a translation from the Arabic of Haji Abu El Yezdi. Its style is like that of the *Rubaiyat.* It is crude but subtle. It is brutal in its anti-theism, and yet it has a certain tender grace of melancholy deeper than Omar's own. It is devoid of Omar's mysticism and epicureanism, and appallingly synthetic. It will not capture the sentimentalist, like the *Rubaiyat,* but when it shall be known it will divide honors with the now universally popular Persian poem. The *Kasidah* was written in 1853, and it is in its opening much like FitzGerald's *Rubaiyat,* though Burton never saw that gem of philosophy and song until eight years after. The *Kasidah* was not printed until 1880. It is difficult to interpret because it so clearly interprets itself. It must be read.

It cannot be "explained." ¶ The *Kasidah* consists of about three hundred couplets of remarkable vigor in condensation ❧ It reviews all the explanations of "the sorry scheme of things" that man has contrived, and it holds forth the writer's own view. He maintains that happiness & misery are equally divided and distributed in this world. Self-cultivation is, in his view, the sole, sufficient object of human life, with due regard for others. The affections, the sympathies and "the divine gift of Pity" are man's highest enjoyments. He advocates suspension of judgment with a proper suspicion of "facts, the idlest of superstitions." This is pure agnosticism ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ There runs all through the poem a sad note that heightens the courage with which the writer faces his own bleak conclusion, and "the tinkling of the camel's bell" is heard faint and far in the surge of his invective, or below the lowest deep of his despair. In Arabia Death rides a camel, instead of a white horse, as our Occidental myth has it, and "the camel's bell" is the music to which all life is attuned. Burton reverts from time to time to this terrifying tintinnabulation, but he blends it

with the suggested glamour of evening, until the terror almost merges into tenderness. The recurrence of this minor chord in the savage sweep of Burton's protest against the irony of existence, is a fascination that the *Kasidah* has in common with every great poem of the world. The materialism of the book is peculiar in that it is Oriental, and Orientalism is peculiarly mystical. The verse is blunt, and almost coarse in places, but here and there are gentler touches, softer tones, that search out the sorrow at the heart of things. It is worthy, in its power, of the praise of Browning, Swinburne, Theodore Watts, Gerald Massey. It is Edward FitzGerald minus the vine and the rose and all Persian silkiness. The problem he sets out to solve, and he solves it by a "petitio principii," is

Why must we meet, why must we part, why must we bear this yoke of Must,
Without our leave or ask or given, by tyrant Fate on victim thrust?

¶ The impermanence of things oppresses him, for he says in an adieu:

. haply some day we meet again;
Yet ne'er the self-same men shall meet; the years shall make us other men.

He crams into one couplet after another, philos-

ophy after philosophy, creed after creed, Stoic, Epicurean, Hebraic, Persian, Christian, and puts his finger on the flaw in them all. Man comes to life as to "the Feast unbid," and finds "the gorgeous table spread with fair-seeming Sodom-fruit, with stones that bear the shape of bread." There is an echo of Koheleth in his contempt for the divinity of the body. It is unclean without, impure within. The vanity of vanity is proclaimed with piteous indignation:

And still the weaver plies his loom, whose warp and woof is wretched Man,
Weaving the unpattern'd, dark design, so dark we doubt it owns a plan.
Dost not, O Maker, blush to hear, amid the storm of tears and blood,
Men say Thy mercy made what is, and saw the made and said 't was good?

And then he sings:

Cease, Man, to mourn, to weep, to wail; enjoy thy shining hour of sun;
We dance along Death's icy brink, but is the dance less full of fun?

In sweeping away the old philosophies and religions, he is at his best as a scorner, but he has "the scorn of scorn" and some of "the love of love" which Tennyson declares is the poet's dower. His lament for the Greek paganism runs:

And when at length, "Great Pan is dead," uprose the loud and dolorous cry,
A glamour wither'd on the ground, a splendour faded in the sky.
Yea, Pan was dead, the Nazarene came and seized his seat beneath the sun,
The votary of the Riddle-god, whose one is three, and three is one.
* * * * * * * * * * * * * *
Then the lank Arab, foul with sweat, the drainer of the camel's dug,
Gorged with his leek-green lizard's meat, clad in his filthy rag and rug,
Bore his fierce Allah o'er his sands

Where, he asks, are all the creeds and crowns and sceptres, "the holy grail of high Jamshid?"

Gone, gone where I and thou must go, borne by the winnowing wings of Death,
The Horror brooding over life, and nearer brought with every breath.
Their fame hath filled the Seven Climes, they rose and reigned, they fought and fell,
As swells and swoons across the wold the tinkling of the Camel's bell.

For him, "there is no good, there is no bad; these be the whims of mortal will." They change with place, they shift with race. "Each vice has borne a Virtue's crown, all Good was banned as Sin or Crime." He takes up the history of the world, as we reconstruct it for the period before history, from geology, astronomy and other sciences. He accepts the murderousness of all processes of life & change. All the cruelty of things "Builds up a world for better use; to general Good bends special Ill."

And thus the race of Being runs, till haply in the time to bo
Earth shifts her pole and Mushtari-men another falling star shall see:
Shall see it fall and fade from sight, whence come, where gone no
Thought can tell,—
Drink of yon mirage-stream and chase the tinkling of the camel's bell.

Yet follow not the unwisdom path, cleave not to this and that disclaim;
Believe in all that man believes; here all and naught are both the
same.
Enough to think that Truth can be: come sit we where the roses glow,
Indeed he knows not how to know who knows not also how to
unknow.

He denies the Soul and wants to know where it was when Man was a savage beast in primeval forests, what shape it had, what dwelling place, what part in nature's plan it played. "What men are pleased to call the Soul was in the hog and dog begun." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

Life is a ladder infinite-stepped that hides its rungs from human eyes:
Planted its foot in chaos-gloom, its head soars high above the skies.

The evolution theory he applies to the development of reason from instinct. He protests against the revulsion from materialism by saying that "the sordider the stuff, the cunninger the workman's hand," and therefore the Maker may have made the world from matter. He maintains that "the hands of Destiny ever deal, in fixed & equal parts, their shares of joy and sorrow, woe and

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weal" to all that breathe our upper air. The problem of predestination he holds in scorn ✍ The unequality of life exists and "that settles it" for him. He accepts one bowl with scant delight, but he says "who drains the score must ne'er expect to rue the headache in the morn." Disputing about creeds is "mumbling rotten bones." His creed is this:

Do what thy manhood bids thee do, from none but self expect applause;
He noblest lives and noblest dies who makes and keeps his self-made laws.
All other Life is living Death, a world where none but Phantoms dwell,
A breath, a wind, a sound, a voice, a tinkling of the Camel's bell.

He appreciates to the full the hedonism of Omar, but he casts it aside as emptiness ✍ He tried the religion of pleasure and beauty. His rules of life are many & first is "eternal war with Ignorance." He says: "Thine ignorance of thine ignorance is thy fiercest foe, the deadliest bane." The Atom must fight the unequal fray against a myriad giants. The end is to "learn the noblest lore, to know that all we know is naught." Self-approval is enough reward ✍ The whole duty of man is to himself, but he must "hold Humanity one man,"

and, looking back at what he was, determine not to be again that thing. "Abjure the Why and seek the How." The gods are silent ❧ The indivisible puny Now in the length of infinite time is Man's all to make the best of ❧ The law may have a giver; but let be, let be!

This "I" may find a future life, a nobler copy of our own,
Where every riddle shall be ree'd, where every knowledge shall be known;
Where 't will be man's to see the whole of what on Earth he sees a part;
Where change shall ne'er surcharge the thought; nor hope deferred shall hurt the heart.
But!—faded flower and fallen leaf no more shall deck the parent tree;
A man once dropt by Tree of Life, what hope of other life has he?
The shattered bowl shall know repair; the riven lute shall sound once more;
But who shall mend the clay of man, the stolen breath to man restore?
The shivered clock again shall strike, the broken reed shall pipe again:
But we, we die and Death is one, the doom of brutes, the doom of men.
Then if Nirvana round our life with nothingness, 't is haply blest;
Thy toils and troubles, want and woe at length have won their guerdon—Rest.
Cease, Abdu, cease! Thy song is sung, nor think the gain the singer's prize,
Till men hold ignorance deadly sin, till man deserves his title "Wise."
In days to come, Days slow to dawn, when wisdom deigns to dwell with men,
These echoes of a voice long stilled, haply shall wake responsive strain:

Wend now thy way with brow serene, fear not thy humble tale
to tell:—
The whispers of the Desert-wind; the tinkling of the Camel's
bell.

So ends the song. The notes appended thereto by Burton are a demonstration of his learning and his polemic power. The poem is his life of quest, of struggle, of disappointment, coined into song more or less savage. It seems to me he overlooked one thing near to him that would have lighted the darkness of his view, while looking to Reason for balm for the wounds of existence. He ignored his wife's love which, silly and absurd as it seems at times, in the records she has left us, is a sweeter poem than this potent plaint and protest he has left us. He explored all lands but the one in which he lived unconsciously—The Land of Tenderness. This is the pity of his life and it is also its indignity. He was crueler than "the Cruelty of Things." He "threw away a pearl richer than all his tribe" —a woman's heart. But—how we argue in a circle! —that he, with his fine vision, could not see this, is perhaps a justification of his poem's bitterness. Even her service went for naught, seeing it brought no return of love from its object ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

Burton was a great man, though a failure ☙ His wife's life was one continuous act of love for him that he ignored, and her life was a failure too, since her love never succeeded in making the world worship him as she did. Still, "the failures of some are infinities beyond the successes of others," and all success is failure in the end. Still, again, it is better to have loved in vain than never to have loved at all, and fine and bold and brave as was Richard Francis Burton, his wife, with her "strong power called weakness" was the greater of the two. She wrote no *Kasidah* of complaint, but suffered and was strong ☙ ☙ ☙ ☙ ☙ ☙

BRICHANTEAU, ACTOR



WANT to tell, as I have read it, the story of a story which is, to me as fulfilled, almost of subtle sweetness of sadness in humour as the tale of that adorable madman, the Knight of La Mancha. It is the story of *Brichanteau, Actor.* For him, M. Jules Claretie, general manager of the Comedie Francaise, academician, member of the Legion of Honor, has performed the service rendered Don Quixote by Cervantes. And in Brichanteau, as in the Spanish hero, who has been called "the Christ of fiction," we find, each one of us, a great deal of ourselves ✍ He is another of the Immortal Fools. He is the actor of all time. He needs no other touch than M. Claretie has given him to make him typify the mummer. He will take his place, unless the world has forgotten the piteous beauty of truth, not only with the Don of the Sorrowful Countenance, but with Falstaff, Micawber and Porthos, and all the characters which arouse our mirth, only to turn it at second thought to tears ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ Whoso knows the actor as he is, will find embodied in Brichanteau all that is best, brightest, bit-

terest, all that is trivial and vain, in the profession which is devoted to the amusement of the world. And as "all the world 's a stage, and all the men and women merely players," this poor, brave, absurd, noble, piteous Brichanteau typifies us all. I know no sadder man, no gentler soul than his in modern fiction. His story is the story of each man ✍ It is the tale of the vanishing ideal over again. It masquerades as comedy, but the center of its charm is the old complaint against the irreconcilability of dream and deed, the old disappointment of grasping at gleams of "the light that never was on land or sea." ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ ✍ To Brichanteau his illusions were the only realities. He lived up to them. His life and his acting were one and the same. He was to himself not a a hero but the hero. He was the incarnation of the heroic ✍ He was every grand part he ever enacted. He was the very spirit of the art mimetic. His life was a long romantic delusion with himself. He was a creature compact of the imaginings of other men. He spoke always in the language of the poets. He lived in a world of dreams out of which hard knocks in contact with facts, "the brute

beasts of the intellectual domain," could not shock him. To him was denied the curse which Bobby Burns implored as a blessing. He could not see himself as others saw him. He was lovable because he did not know himself as he was. Could he have done so, he would have hated himself and mankind, as would we all. To be sure he was preposterous, living in this hard world as though it were a world of mighty shadows of men and women, mighty imaginings of splendid deeds. His living close to the ideal, however, purified him of all malice. His heart was like a little child's. He knew not that he was the victim of Life and of the best thing in life. The world of real men did not exist for Brichanteau. Subjectively he reduced them to the idealities to which he was himself devoted. A glamour of gentle madness was over him and, blessed by the gods, he never knew the pain he represented to his fellows ❧ He was the soul of failure, yet in his own world he never truly knew he failed. Illusion beatified him. And reading of him you will find, dear readers, that your pity for him is, in the last analysis, more than half envy of him ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

Those who know actors know that vanity is almost the essence of the actor's life. It is common comment that the actor never ceases to act. The star and the tyro are alike in their concentration upon their own importance. They "read nothing but their own press notices." They become absorbed in the unrealities to which they are professionally devoted. They accept flattery as if flatterers mean what they say. They are critically disparaging in their loftiest flights of praise of each other. They are composites of their make-ups. Something of all their impersonations sink into them with the grease paints. Their acting becomes the actual. They live in an atmosphere of simulated emotion, so that they seem at times to know none other. In Brichanteau you may see them all, to every little quiddity and oddity virtuous or vicious, down to the stride and even the inevitable, fur-trimmed great coat. You may laugh at him, may despise him, may loathe him at times, but in the end you are sure to love him. Let's to the book! ❧ ❧ ❧ We are introduced to Brichanteau standing in a quizzically critical attitude, yet with a certain dignity touched with the comic, before the statue

of "The Roman Soldier Humiliated Under the Gallic Yoke." The statue stands in the Garden of Sculpture at the Salon in Paris. The Sculpture of the Roman Soldier reveals the lineaments of the man who stands before it. It is plain that Sebastien Brichanteau was the model. It was a statue that barely had been accepted. The Failure stood before a failure—before a failure to express in sculpture the tragedy of defeat. Yes, Brichanteau had posed for it. And he tells the author that his "intelligence is at the service of the poets in their interpretations" and his body "always ready to guide the inspiration of painters and sculptors." As he talks, Brichanteau is the model for elegant and refined bombast ❧ It would grow fearfully tiresome, but that his good, kind heart breaks through it and you find, under his delusion of greatness, true nobility of soul. After celebrating himself and all he meant to express in posing for the Roman, as if the model were not altogether an inferior factor in a work of art to the artist, he tells the story of the artist of the failure. So, you see, the book starts out with a perfect riot of the symbolism of Defeat ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧

Montescure was the artist. He played the horn in the Theatre de Capitole. Only a horn-player, you say. Ah, no! Brichanteau says, "All callings are honorable, monsieur, when art is their goal." He came to Paris. He played the horn at night, and playing, dreamed of his true work of sculpturing during the day. At the Theatre de Montmartre, Brichanteau was playing and Montescure tooting the horn in the orchestra. The twin souls in delusion rushed together ✍ Something in the horn's notes, plaintive and vigorous, struck Brichanteau. He looked at the musician and found him a consumptive. Why, he was taken with fits of coughing, even during Brichanteau's strongest scene in *La Tour de Nesle,* and a gallery god told the cougher to "Get out of the orchestra, 'sirop de cadavre!'" Brichanteau saw him leave, put his handkerchief to his mouth and, taking it away, reveal the stains of blood ✍ After the show they met, the musician to apologize to the actor. Brichanteau received his apology as homage. He did not mind coughing. Had he not been bombarded with green apples, "those vegetable bombshells, which the soldiers of art defy?" You must read

Brichanteau's own words to get the exquisite flavor of his actoresque self-appreciation ❧ It is delicious in its serenity. His speech is essentially florid and ultra-theatrical ❧ It reeks with stage mannerisms, and as M. Claretie reports it, you have no difficulty in filling in, from your own recollections of "the profesh," all the shabby gentility of the talker and all the mock elegance of his manner ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Montescure's story, as he told it, is rehearsed by Brichanteau, from the time he was born in Garigat-sur-Garonne, until the grand event—his meeting with Brichanteau. The actor agrees to pose for the Roman, in the statue to which we have been introduced. He will do it without pay for "Art's sake." As he declares it, you realize that in his ridiculous sincerity there lingers a touch of the sublime. Brichanteau poses for the Roman. He tells us all the expression of greatness fallen he tried to put into his pose, and as he tells it with extravagant absurdity, he threads the revelation of his own vanity with a touching description of the consumptive, half-starved sculptor at work, sustained only by the force of his dream

that the completed sculpture will give him fame. The contrasted delusions of the two men make a powerful appeal to one's pity ❧ The ridiculous, stilted speech in which the tale is told is peppered with sentences of rare beauty and insight, flashes of sure criticism, wit, humor, eloquence, graceful allusion. Brichanteau's talk is a generous stream of the wisdom of the fool. It is a marvel of practical sense pouring from the most impractical of mortals ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The sculptor is in love with the ingenue of Brichanteau's company—it is a vain love that glorifies his vain life and vain ambition. When he played in the orchestra she made fun of him in the wings, saying his tunes "made eyes at her." Brichanteau pities the artist, sympathizes with his dream, supports him and dreams all the while to himself, that the famous "Roman under the Yoke" is to immortalize him, too. The actor sells his clothes to help the sculptor. He reads poetry to him, he confesses with shame, to put him to sleep. The sculptor dies murmuring & mumbling of "Glory"—"the great mirage that leads us all on," says Brichanteau. The ingenue laughs, when invited to the funeral.

The sculpture was sent to the Salon and put away in a corner where none could see it. Brichanteau took up a collection, bought a wreath and placed it on the statue ✍ He declares his intention of having a statue set up in the sculptor's town, Garigat-sur-Garonne, of doing all in his power to realize for Montescure posthumously, the dream of glory. He was chasing another chimera, a chimera created out of the goodness of Brichanteau's heart. ¶ Can't you imagine Brichanteau? No? ✍ Well, take the figure of the typical actor in a *Puck* picture. Extract from it the vulgarity of the latter-day cartoonist and substitute a little dignity and pathos. Then you have Brichanteau, kind-hearted, tall, shiny as to coat-sleeves, smooth-shaven, deliberate in movement, pompous, grandiloquent. Fool that he is, still he is a hero, for he lives up to his ideals of art, of friendship, of personal worth, regardless of all the world. Generous simpleton that he is, he forgives the world for not taking him at his own valuation ✍ He lives bolt upright, denying strenuously to himself that verdict of the world—written all over him—vanquished. All his story, as M. Claretie tells it, is a

song for the vanquished. ¶ The incident of the lasso, in this story, is a bit of Gargantuan fun, broad, yet toned by an artist's true sense of restraint. It is a gorgeous example of the pathetic, of the anticlimactic effect of taking art too seriously. The incident occurred at Perpignan, where Brichanteau found himself. It is one of his reminiscences, for it must be remembered Brichanteau, who deems himself a great actor, has reached the stage in his succession of failures, at which he is a starter of bicycle races. This book of M. Claretie's is the reminiscential monologue of a "crushed tragedian" on the last of his uppers, still satisfied of his own superiority, and content to start races because he knows he does it in the grand, inimitable manner. It is art to him. Well, at Perpignan Brichanteau was acting. One acts where one can. Even there, there were lovers of art. For them he acted, so what did he care? The Perpignan *Argus* had an art critic; "the Jules Janin of Rivesaltes" he was called. The critic "roasted" Brichanteau, called him "a strolling player." Brichanteau was advised to make terms with the critic. Never! He would not sue for mercy ❧ He recognized the

critic's duty ❧ But Brichanteau's portrait of the critic is admirable in its searching sarcasm. You have the motives of the French critic laid bare. This one was "practicing in the provinces," before going up to Paris, to terrorize the great ones of the stage. Brichanteau seeks out the critic, stares him in the face and passes on ❧ The critic flays Brichanteau's acting in *The Pirates of the Savane,* tells him to "go be a vaquero in a circus and ply the lasso." Worst of all, the critic captures Brichanteau's sweetheart, Jeanne Horly, and leads her away to his rooms ❧ This was one of the critic's perquisites. Women gave themselves to him for "nice notices." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ "The Jules Janin of Rivesaltes" "roasts" Brichanteau steadily, but, nevertheless, Brichanteau receives his wreath. He will not play in any theatre if the manager will not let him be presented with a wreath. Brichanteau carries his wreath with him. He writes the speeches with which it is presented. He eulogizes himself in the language of chastened reverence, through the lips of the girl who delivers the address. He is the priest of himself, apotheosizes himself. It is all done in a serious

way, too, with just a little wistful laughter coming out now and then from under his heroics. What! The world will not recognize Brichanteau? Very well. The world is a dolt. It does n't know art or artists ✍ He recognizes and celebrates himself. This incident of the self-presented wreath is as funny as, and much finer in fun than, Smollett's *Dinner of the Ancients,* and yet has a secondary touch of pathos in the megalomania of the man. As Brichanteau describes it, it is simply the acme of delicious self-deception. His speech to himself reminds one of Falstaff's praise of himself when he speaks as the King to the wild Prince Hal. It has not Sir John's unction, but it has an unction of its own, although it is rarer and along more ideal lines, all unconscious of sarcasm ✍ ✍ ✍ The critic assails the wreath-presentation. Brichanteau hunts him up and challenges him. Brichanteau, as the aggrieved person, chooses the lasso as his weapon ✍ In a play called *The Gaucho* Brichanteau has a part in which he has occasion to apostrophize the lasso. He thunders the lines, lines of awful, yellow, dramatic toplofticality, at the critic who watches the play in a box. Here is

one of the lines: "I will use against thee the weapon of the peons and the Gauchos, vile wretch, and I will drag thee to my hacienda, hanging from my saddle like a strangled jaguar." The audience went wild. Brichanteau has scorned the critic and larruped him, metaphorically, with the lasso. The critic demanded an apology. Never! Brichanteau would have to fight. Very well, then, he would fight with the lasso. Of course the critic would not fight that way. His friends "posted" Brichanteau ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ But Brichanteau was satisfied with himself. He had crushed the critic, who went to Paris and grew rich, deserting Brichanteau's sweetheart, Jeanne Horly. Contemplating the critic's success, later, in Paris, Brichanteau says, "All the same, had it not been for the lasso, 'the Jules Janin of Rivesaltes' might have stayed down at Perpignan. It was I—I, Brichanteau, who enriched Paris with him." He forgave his enemy, this hero of the mock heroic.

¶ Another farcical incident is the incident of the card-photograph. That is to say, it is farcical to the reader, but it makes you pity poor Brichanteau. It is just a little romance of his that turns

out to make him riciculous. It is what we might call the story of an actor's "mash." He gives his picture to a woman. He thinks she recognizes him for what he thinks he is and loves him. His capacity for idealization comes into play to build up around himself and "the English lady" a grand romance. She asks for his photograph. He dreams of a duel with her husband, and the end of his fancies is that he finds her husband regards the picture of the great Brichanteau as a mascot to enable him to "break the bank at Monte Carlo." Gamblers regard all "freaks" as mascots. What says Brichanteau to the farcical ending of his romance? Only this sentence of pathetic-humorous regret: "Although a fetich for him, I have never, alas, brought myself any luck." There is a chapter devoted to Brichanteau's triumph as Louis XI. that is rich in sarcastic portrayal of the difficulties of provincial presentation. Of course, Brichanteau's triumph is a triumph solely to himself As he tells it, it is great; but beyond him you can see and hear the crowd laughing at him for the way he "chewed up the scenery." To-day and in this country we would call

Brichanteau a bum actor, and that he surely was, but not in his own opinion. ❧ The irony of the approval he received escaped him. At best he was a "hit" only in an out-of-the-way place, at Compiegne ❧ But to him the praise, the bravos, the compliments were as sweet as though he had won them at the Comedie Francaise. Sincere, pitiably sincere, as he was himself, he was blessed with the insanity of believing that he attained the height he craved, and that all around him were as sincere as he ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Brichanteau's sally from besieged Paris, his capture by the beleaguers and his wild scheme to kidnap the German Emperor and enforce a raising of the siege—these are all incidents which to be enjoyed, must be read in full ❧ His scheme failed, of course, but Brichanteau lived in a dream of immortality as France's savior, while the ridiculous project occupied his fantastic mind. He had it all figured out like a play, the things he would do, the attitudes he would strike, the fine lines like those of Moliere or Hugo or Shakespeare, that he would say on this occasion or in that situation. The failure did not undeceive him. He felt

that he would have accomplished his end, but for the capitulation ❧ He had lived it to successful accomplishment in his dream anyhow, and it was one of his treasures of glory. Brichanteau could not conceive of a universe without himself as the heroic center thereof. How young his heart was; just like the boy who is the hero of each novel he reads ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The story of Brichanteau's trial as an actor at the Conservatory, when he first took to the stage, is a graphic picture of an important function in the artist-life of Paris ❧ It is given with rare humor and irony and with a fine sense of pity for those who are mistaken in their estimate of their vocation or of their abilities. Brichanteau had a tremendous voice. He bawled before the judges. He could see that his teacher was jealous of his voice, and that made him roar the louder. You can hear the authorities of the Conservatory laughing at Brichanteau's fustian, but he could not. To him, they all recognized his greatness and conspired against him. He repeats their ironical compliments. He sees the tragic and the comic in all the other candidates and hits off either in most telling

fashion, and this it is that really makes piteous his inability rightly to estimate himself. Now and then there drops into his recital a little note that finds your heart, as when he thinks on the day he gains only a "mention," that his parents are happier dead, that they do not witness his failure ✦ He could think of this even while he felt that his failure was due to jealousy on the part of his judges. His only comfort was little Jenny Valadon. They lived upon love in a garret. His career as a bad actor is recited in terrible detail, when you think of the heart-break in it all, which he conceals beneath a sort of wistful humor ✦ But he consoled himself. He had imaginary triumphs. He had been kings, heroes, geniuses, all the characters of great associations in the French drama. They were all real to him. The imaginary glories fattened him. They gilded his destitution. Truly comical as the delusion seems at times, one almost can cry for Brichanteau, ranting thro' life under the impression that he was an unappreciated Talma, and all the crowd giggling inextinguishably at his immense voice and giving him jeering applause. That voice! Little Jenny killed herself

trying to act up to it. Brichanteau roared on the stage. She tore out her throat and lungs to equal him, for what he did was right, to her. They had to part, and whither she went before going to the grave, one may guess. Brichanteau mourned her as a sweet sacrifice to his voice, to Art ✍ ✍ ✍ Of course Brichanteau admired the great Napoleon, as a true Frenchman ✍ His admiration for Napoleon was great, not only because Napoleon was a grand character, but because he had appeared in plays in which Napoleon was a character, and once or twice had played Napoleon himself. There is a fine scene in the book, in which our hero quarrels with another disappointed actor over Napoleon. The other old actor, Dauberval, denounced Napoleon as an enemy of art ✍ The scene in which the two actors develop their quarrel is well contrived to show us Brichanteau's loyalty. He said that if Napoleon liked old tragedies and "stuff" it was not Napoleon's fault that Victor Hugo came later. Dauberval maintained that Napoleon was an idiot ✍ Brichanteau leaves his house. "I am not a Bonapartist," he says, "but my heart remembers. So many recalls in that role,

I, who had played *Remond* in *L'Empereur et le Soldat,* say that Napoleon was an idiot? Wipe out my past at a single stroke?" Brichanteau was Napoleon, the happy, old hallucinant ⁂ ⁂ ⁂ It was a great day when it came, the day for the casting of Montescure's statue of "The Roman Soldier," or of Brichanteau, for had not the actor vowed that he and the sculptor should be immortalized in bronze at Garigat-sur-Garonne? ⁂ The town had agreed to purchase that work ⁂ The mayor had the idea that the event would bring a minister to the town for the dedication, and the minister would give the mayor the Cross of the Legion ⁂ Montescure, who had asked for bread, was to be given a stone, like Butler, author of *Hudibras.* It was a great day, not only that Montescure was to be avenged, but because it was Sebastien Brichanteau they were going to cast. He knew that all present knew that the statue was lie. He mused: "That metal, Brichanteau, is your image still in liquid form ⁂ That bronze in fusion is your statue. That blazing stream is, perhaps, your forehead; those bursts of flame are from your eyes." ⁂ An excellent Brocken scene,

should he ever play *Faust* ❧ What if the metal should give out? ❧ He remembered Benvenuto Cellini in like case, for had he not played Benvenuto once? He enacted the part of Cellini all over again. Ah, if he ever should play it again, what new meaning he would be able to put in the line, "Ah, if blood could be hardened into bronze!" At last it is over. Brichanteau exclaims: "I was cast, like Cellini's Jupiter." ❧ When the mold was broken he gazed upon himself & rhapsodized. Hope was high. He was to conquer Fate. But the statue never was dedicated. Brichanteau never heard himself apostrophized in the Roman. He had no chance to read a poem ❧ The statue remains in a shed. Still Brichanteau never despairs. He will arrange a benefit to raise Montescure's disguised statue of Brichanteau in the bright sunlight ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ Brichanteau's sketch of an actor's funeral is a marvel of what bitterness may underlie even the pathetic note in fun. The actor Panazol is buried with services at which what was to have been a eulogy turns out to be a criticism and a cruel one. An actor cannot speak unreserved praise of even

a dead fellow-mummer. Another actor arises to say something over the grave, forgets his memorized speech and begins to declaim from a part he is then studying ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ We may pass over the glories of the old days, as Brichanteau remembers them, with all their roles. He goes to America, but is taken with cholera at Havana. He returns to France. He is getting old. He goes down hill, but the hunger of the ideal, the appetite for applause does not die ❧ He still stood erect in his pride ❧ He was, he declared, steadfast to art. "Even when you play subordinate roles," said he to himself, "you play them in genuine theatres and in works of art ❧ You will die with the drama, Brichanteau. You have and you will keep immaculate your self-esteem." He would not take a pension. He would not appear in a cafe chantant. But he became a starter for the bicycle races. He shouted "Go!" That grand voice had not lost its magnificence. "Go," he says. "You hear that note? Go! Yes, the voice still has its trumpet tone." ❧ It is art even to start bicycle races. It is to be done with all one's soul. He shuts his eyes as he says "Go," sometimes, and imagines

that he is giving the signal for an epic duel as in *La Dame de Monsoreau*. And he listens for the clash of swords, the resounding roar of applause. He starts by firing a pistol, and he breathes the powder of the old days. Then he tells the story of a tenor with a bad memory who, on his first night, being billed in the *Huguenots*, rushes on the stage and sings *Robert le Diable*. This tenor he knows well. He laughs at the tenor's idea that he was crushed by a conspiracy. ❧ The tenor is now a policeman and he maintains that he performed a great feat in lyric art, did an immortal thing in giving a rendition of two of Myerbeer's operas at once. Brichanteau winks in his sleeve at the delusion, but he is certain that he was kept out of the Comedie Francaise by Beauvallet's jealousy of his voice ❧ He sees the mote, not the beam. ¶ Old and still older he grows, more shabby-genteel, but with a knightly manner of leaning upon his umbrella, as if it were a rapier. There is sadness in his eyes. But he still remembers "The Roman Under the Yoke." That statue will yet be dedicated—dedicated to the long dead sculptor and to Brichanteau, his model. He bestirs himself

for that end. He will arrange a benefit. He finds an old sweetheart in a madhouse. She does not know him. She has forgotten the old days. They had been happy together, he and the grisette, who was the victim of a drunken husband. He rehearses her story. The woman had loved him. She had sworn by her father's head that she never loved but one being in the world, himself ✍ He would add his sweetheart's name to the benefit program ✍ He would raise funds to dedicate the statue and to keep her in tobacco and a few delicacies. He tells of his petitioning the great, climbing the staircases of the successful actors. He describes their willingness to aid, and incidentally, their vanity and mercenariness. 'T is a pretty yet a sad tale of devotion. The benefit is arranged; he has secured a lot of great names. The day arrives. The audience gathers. The owners of the great names withdraw. They will not appear with certain other successes ✍ They will not come after rivals on the bill. Brichanteau undertakes to take the places of them all. Such a performance! He is the Proteus of the evening ✍ But the affair is not a success. He has not made any money for

the statue or for his old love's easement in her madhouse. He is in despair. An old actor friend appears. It is Lanteclave. He has a pension. He will contribute to the benefit performance, for his pension comes from the "Association of Artists," which Brichanteau never would join. Lanteclave will do this for Montescure's statue and for Virginie, for our Virginie ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ "Our" was the word. Lanteclave recalls Lyons, of the old days, when he was in the company with Brichanteau and Virginie, who had sworn on her father's head that she never loved any one but Brichanteau. "Yes, yes, yes," says Brichanteau.

❡ "Do you remember that, sometimes, when you were waiting for the mistress over Perrache Way, she told you she had a tooth to be looked after and that she had been detained by the dentist?"

❡ "Do I remember?"

"Look you, Brichanteau, she no more had a tooth to be attended to than you had. The dentist, my dear boy, the dentist"—

"Was you?"

"Another illusion swept away." Says Brichanteau: "He had the good taste to assure me that Vir-

ginie passed her sessions with him protesting that she adored me, and that she did not know why she deceived me. Perhaps it was because Lanteclave sang Boranger's songs extremely well." Brichanteau held music an inferior art to acting. He admitted it seemed a bitter thing to have climbed so many staircases, and to have played "Le Beneficiare" without profit, to find that "the last little rosy dream was a soap-bubble, which burst like the others." This is the end. He abandons the statue, leaves himself to be tossed about as old metal in the foundry. His illusions were with his youth, in the ash-heap. The bicycle races would give him bread Illusions, all—Love, Glory, Art! Poor Brichanteau! And yet not poor either. He had possessed them all in his dreams He had had them in and of himself. Are not the illusions of all of us the only realities? Are they not better, to those of us who have such illusions, than the realities of others? Only the ideal is eternal, untouched by the corruption that is in the clay, and only to be found, if at all, when we are gathered to the bosom of "just and mighty Death." Only our dreams, if

anything, come true ✍ They are ours, ours only while we have them. Awakening cannot rob us of them. Brichanteau's dreams were true. Only the realities on which they were built were false and faded away. Why should we pity him after all? ✍ Were it not better that we should emulate him? He dreamed dreams that transmuted all his dross to gold, changed the cup of gall to wine, ennobled even his own pettinesses, brightened and touched to charity all about him. The world did not come up to his conception. So much the worse for the world. Come, let us dream! ✍ ✍

A GOLDEN BOOK



OUL & sense are not wholly separate. The world, under the spell of a vicious asceticism, has been used to regard the two as not only separate but antagonistic. The spirituality of the sensuous is the saner part of the message of that movement in letters which has been called the Decadence ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ We Anglo-Saxons are too much enamored of the evident, too much content with the direct. In our materiality we are, even in our ideals of art, somewhat coarse. We have not that flair for the subtle suggestions that lie behind things which characterize the Latins. We are too much devoted to action, which, Frederick Amiel has declared, is, at its best, only coarsened thought. We put more energy into life. We do not get so much out of it. This is because we do not cultivate the senses to that acuteness and sensitiveness which, so to speak, enables the eye to apprehend the invisible, the ear to encompass the inaudible, and all the sensory organs to contribute pleasure through emotions that are almost as vague as premonitions. Our souls can only be found with a club,

when our hearts should be reached with a stab of a shaft of perfume, or our spirits lifted by an appeal of color, or the mind's eye opened to the greater glories in the shapeliness of sound and its hues ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ We have exalted the soul too much, through a misconception of it. It is nothing without the body. The body gives the soul its form and effect; its character. It is the body, really, which makes for individuality. It is the body which variegates the soul to the world's eye, just as Shelley says, "Life, like a dome of many-colored glass, stains the white radiance of Eternity." ❧ The body is an equally integral part of man with the soul, equally divine. It is as much the care of the Infinite, according to Christianity; else why the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh? Through the body the soul makes itself manifest. Without the body the soul is unknown. It may exist apart, but what eye hath seen or ear heard it? It may exist as "the raw material," but the body is the stamp with which it is coined by the Creator ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The senses are of the body. They are the body's response in thought & feeling to physical impacts

and contacts. They are, thus, very material. They are the result of resisted motion, vibrations of light, of sound, the impinging of molecules upon tongue or nasal membrane. They are the seat of the soul. They are the means whereby we learn, and by comparison of their operations we reason. The senses are the ingredients of every emotion and the core of every thought. The soul is spread all over the body, just as the body is one vast brain by reason of the nerves. The body is the life ❧ The soul—why, it cannot dream but its fancies are regulated by the operation of forces in the body ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The sensuous is the beautiful, always, everywhere. There is no rapture so pure but it has to be translated for expression into the terms of the senses. There is nothing in life that is not, when resolved into essentials, bodily. The soul is only the body's highest function, the focus of all the senses. There is, so far as we know, no life when all of the senses are dead. The cases of Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller do not tend to the disproving of this proposition. The "missing senses" in those persons are not missing; they are concentrated in

other senses ❧ Five senses may center, as in the case of the latter girl, in one. The senses are, it may be presumed, one. Touch is a lower sight, sight a swifter hearing, smell a modification of touch, and hearing and taste the same. There is a strong probability that light and sound and heat are the same force. There is a probability, equally strong, that the senses are but the soul diffused in different parts of the body ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ And why should such a gospel and its preachers be anathema? Did not God take upon Himself, without derogation, a body? If He became Man, the Divine experiment would have been a failure if He became not a complete man; if He did not feel all that man feels and catch the tinge of the bodily envelope, if He knew not all the ecstasies of the flesh, which we have been taught to call sin, as well as the pain of death ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ To the English-speaking world this gospel of the divinity of the body has always worn an aspect of blasphemy. The Epicurean doctrine has been enormously misunderstood as being a philosophy of the pig-sty. The regard for the senses has been held to be purely debasing in every respect, and

the very word hedonism has come to mean nameless things. This doctrine of pleasure has suffered to a vast degree by reason of the fact that the last most conspicuous hedonist, or, rather, professor of hedonism, was most colossally disgraced. There is, however, nothing in common between the philosophic Epicureanism and the unspeakable corruption that corruscated, like the rotting mackerel in the moonlight, in that ghastly romance, "The Picture of Dorian Gray." True Epicureanism teaches only a sane enjoyment of the senses, coordinating them all into a great reasonableness. The senses, or, if you will, the passions, are not wholly evil: not the veriest Puritan will claim that much. The senses are to be enjoyed, not solely for their exercise, but they are to be blended and at the same time held in restraint, the reason mastering their exercise and utilizing them in the interpretation of the world, and in obtaining a calm grasp of the fullness of life, so far as may be, for the purpose of making the highest use of life. It may be pointed out that Herbert Spencer is himself much of an Epicurean, much of an hedonist, much of a materialist in many ways,

and yet no one in the pursuit of happiness, according to the Spencerian idea, has, by virtue of that method, become fastened in the quagmire of the corruption of the flesh. The senses are the media for the enjoyment of pleasure. Happiness is the end of existence ❧ The attainment of happiness, while keeping rational control of the media of pleasurable perception, so that our attainment may not inflict discomfort or pain upon others, is the Spencerian ideal of life's object, very broadly stated, of course ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The modern idea of the Epicurean doctrine is a very wrong one. It has been held to be a philosophy of sensuality, whereas, in fact, it is a philosophy only of the highest utilization of the sensuous. If the doctrine were ever set forth more effectively, even by Epicurus himself, than by the late Walter Pater, the world knows not the name of the expounder. The books of Walter Pater are a treasury of the cultus of the sensuous. They are volumes that feed one with a craving for more. They are maddeningly Barmecidal. Such sincere prose no one in these later days—not even Stevenson—has written. Its impeccability is reproachful. It mocks

the yearning for utterance ✍ It says things that are not in the mere words of his pen. His thought is conveyed along his sentences as mysteriously and invisibly as a message is conducted by a telegraph wire. One knows not if the communication proceeds through the core or if it plays around the surface ✍ He is not easily understood of the many—he thinks so finely and with such precision; but to read him is to know the eloquence of speech just hovering on silence, to catch hints of the inexpressible in expression ✍ His best book, illustrating his refined stylism and expounding his calmly sensuous philosophy, developing eventually into a tender and an exalted spirituality, is *Marius, the Epicurean*. It is the soul-story of a man whose soul was his senses ✍ It is a pagan book, but it most soothingly allures one, by the very pagan beauty of it, into a purely sensuous or sentimental sympathy with Christianity ✍ ✍ ✍ The development of a Roman youth of gentle sentiment is traced, in this book, with an exquisiteness of depiction that is almost morbid in restraint ✍ It seems that sanity would not be patient enough to carve and polish, and select,

and chase, and tint words into exact conveyance of thought and shades of thought and feeling as Pater has done. Even the punctuation marks are palpably part of the art, have a significance beyond the ordinary, an importance as of notes in music. Now the language is like music, now like mosaic; again like running water or smiles, and again like the play of firelight in a room at twilight. The language holds in solution, as it were, the effects of all the arts ✍ The man paints and prays, and sings and sobs with his pen. At times he can almost convey the color of an idea and the form of a taste. To him words seem to have values that compel their adjustment in relationship to one another in such wise, that no one may be displaced without damage to the meaning. Reading Pater one is reminded that there is a mysterious spell in words quite independent of their meaning, and they are being continually manipulated by this master so as to produce the effects of painting and of music ✍ In this novel, though now and then the author speaks from the view-point of a man of this day, the atmosphere of the book is that of the olden time. The reader

sees the world far, far away. The very sunshine upon it seems old ✍ You see Rome through the eyes of a philosopher "fighting dim battles in a doubtful land"—his own soul—and the life of the then world appeals to you with a distant sadness of beauty as if seen from the quiet Garden of Proserpine. The material world is there, but it is the world of sensations and ideas of the time of Marcus Aurelius that is most in evidence. "The grandeur that was Rome" is lost sight of in the powerful appeal of the struggle of one man's mind and heart and soul to reconcile it all to some reasonable explanation for the world's existence. We see Rome through a singularly impressive temperament and with the eyes of a man upon a sentimental soul-journey in a world that is beautiful to his senses, but, at the beginning, meaningless to his intelligence. In the main the life of the hero of this tale is a life not of action ✍ It is the life of a man naturally and preferably pure in a time of flagrant art ✍ Marius is a "man of feeling," a fine instrument upon which every aspect of the world causes to be played some melody, always of a minor strain. Marius is compact of

nothing but sensations and ideas ✍ He thinks almost wholly in the feelings, lives in them almost exclusively, but this sensuousness of him one soon perceives to be soulful to the last degree. He wishes to find the secret of the beauty and the glory and the sadness of that beauty and that glory of the world. Indeed, one realizes for the first time in reading this novel, what a pity must have underlain all that frank joyousness of the pagan world of which we have heard so much, at least to the men of culture who turned from the fantastic mythological explanations of things, accepted readily enough by the common herd, and sought for the heart of the mystery in the philosophies then current ✍ The old order was changing, changing incomprehensibly. The old systems of thought were being found incapable of satisfying certain yearnings for which there was no gratification in the life of the period. It was a period of transition. The influences making for change were almost wholly indistinguishable. The world was wearisome even in its beauty that passed away, and from which man passed away, without any definite hope or any definite dread,

but with only a regret that how much soever he had enjoyed the spectacle, or the making of the spectacle for others, the grave was the end of all. The world was disillusioned. The learned believed nothing but what they felt and saw. The intellectuals held by a sort of melancholy atheism, but their sentiment for the beauty and the mystery of the scene of which they were a part prevented them from lapsing into an anti-theism. Christianity was a despised sect. Its professors were barbarians and slaves. Its rites were foul and murderous. Its doctrines meant the overthrow of the State. It was said that the professors of the new religion were the votaries of hideous vices. Even the good Marcus Aurelius persecuted them, and Rome wondered at their fanaticism, which scorned death and even sought it, and at the miracles performed by the blood and bones of those of their number who had been slain for their belief. Of such people, habitants of noisome places, unclean in mind and body, the great world of Rome knew and cared nothing. The new creed would be stamped out in a short time. It never dawned upon persons of the rank of Marius that this new,

mad, unintelligible cult was the new order to which the ferment of transition in their own poetico-philanthropic minds and weary hearts was irresistibly tending ❧ The Roman world scarcely gave second thought to this new creed, or if it did, it was only to laugh at it, when the fashionables were not enjoying the spectacle of the followers of the crucified Jew being thrown to the lions. Of this sect Marius, born in the country, had no knowledge at all ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The picture of the rural youth of Marius, of his susceptibility to the beauty, the pathos, the hint of something lovely but unsatisfying, coming from "beyond the flaming ramparts of the world," in common things no less than in the forms of "the religion of Numa," is a triumph of the presentation of subjective moods. Perhaps Pater is anachronistic in endowing Marius with such acute sensibility to nature as here shown, for love of nature is a modern development, but the anachronism may be suffered to pass in consideration of its artistic truth. The sense of Marius' removal from his time is suggested so powerfully that the very sunshine of the days in which he lived seems

shining on the page with some special, ancient, archaic quality of light. The growth of the boy into the man and of the desire for beauty, which was gratified and yet not gratified in the life and the visible, tangible world about him, the slow growth of pity into piety after his mother's death, the development of a certain strong, sane scrupulousness of thought and conduct into a sort of wistful elegance, the beginning of his first friendship with Flavian, who might be characterized as an immeasurably idealized predecessor of Steerforth, who introduces him to Roman life and represented at once "the depth of its corruption and its perfection of form"—all these things are shown with a touch of magically sympathetic feeling expressed in rare preciosity of style. It is Flavian who leads Marius to read Apuleius' book, *The Ass,* and incidental to the interpretation of the meaning of that exquisite and yet grotesque first novel there is a translation by Pater of *The Story of Cupid and Psyche,* that has already been enrolled among "the little classics" of the English language. Following upon a calmly eloquent criticism of the euphuism of the time, its literary,

sophistic, artistic dandyism, and the descriptions of some perfect days on the water, comes "the pagan end" of Flavian, dying of a fever ❧ The dumb courage and despair of the young exquisite's passing, his struggle "to arrest this or that little drop, at least, from the river of sensuous imagery rushing so quickly past him," and the impressions of the incidents of dying upon Marius, are fine with a fineness beyond any mere realism. "Is it a comfort," whispered Marius, "that I shall often come and weep over you?" "Not unless I be aware and hear you weeping." ❧ ❧ ❧ There are more vivid descriptions of Rome than that which Pater gives in the chapter in which he brings Marius to the then "most religious city of the world," but there is no other description which conveys the soul of that city, concerned apparently with only grandeur and form and the carnality of pleasure, but ever and always suffused with a sadness that it could not explain. It is here that Pater introduces that *Discourse of Marcus Aurelius,* a condensation of the famous *Meditations,* which contains all that reason may say in protest against the vanity of all things.

Here, too, Pater analyzes the Roman amusements as they appealed or failed to appeal to Marius, and gives an inkling of the beginning of a realization in the world that there was something to offend the finer spirit in mere brutality and regardlessness of pain. It was under Marcus Aurelius, as Pater has it, that civilization, disappointed deeply in the quest of happiness through the mind, began to find its heart and to develop a rudimentary charity it had never known before. And this had happened coincidentally with another tendency of the time, presented by Pater in a rarefiedly analytical account of the stoicism of the Roman court, a stoicism that had grown into a delicate dilletante culture and was finally lapsing into a perfunctory formalism & coldness of heart in practice and into mere rhetoric in expression. There are little patches of transcript from actual life, quite casually introduced, to relieve the burden of tenuously discursive philosophizing. All these thoughts and things, these sensations and ideas, experienced, observed and resolved in the mind of Marius are interpreted by Pater with a peculiarly precise and curious felicity and

with a truly marvelous capacity for identification of himself with the thought and fitting himself to the environment of old time. Marius, thinking, as one might say, with his sympathies, and with those sympathies repelled by every philosophy that he knew, comes at last to the apprehension of the Great Ideal. He conceived the unreality of the things about him, unless they were interpreted by something beyond and without the material, and grasped the full significance of the hint that something had been missing hitherto in his enjoyments and even in his sorrows ❧ ❧ ❧ ¶ How, finally, Marius, skeptic, yet believing, comes into contact with the Christians and their philosophy and their ceremonies, and how, gradually, the meaning of Christian love and the fervency of Christian hope come to fill up for him the empty, unsatisfying spaces in the rationally beautiful philosophy of Marcus Aurelius, we must leave to the reader to find out, warning him, however, that to the man looking only for a story, this philosophical novel must be the most egregious of disappointments. Without subscribing to any of the Christian beliefs, but simply observing them

and their influences upon those who held them, Marius grew to find a certain satisfaction in them. He rises absolutely unconsciously to the height of self-sacrifice. The Epicurean comes to know a nameless joy in suffering, to understand a deeper and broader meaning in the natural affections. All the philosophies have failed and peace comes through something that is more than philosophy —through Love. "In the bare sense of having loved, he seemed to find," when captured with the hated Christians, infected with the plague, and dying, as he well knew, "even amid this foundering of the ship, that on which his soul might assuredly rest and depend." But the old instinct of the artist, the craving for sense-satiation is on him; he looks back on life as a portion of a race-course left behind him, and he a runner still swift of foot; he experiences a singular curiosity, almost an ardent desire, to enter upon a future the possibilities of which seemed so large * * * We find him wishing to die like an artist, craving for a fitness in the finale. He thought "that not to die on a dark or rainy day might itself have a little alleviating grace or favor about it." In the

moments of his extreme helplessness," says Pater, "their (the Christians') mystic bread had been placed, and descended like a snowflake from the sky, between his lips. Gentle fingers had applied to hands and feet, to all those old passageways of the senses, through which the world had come and gone for him, now so dim and obstructed, a medicinable oil." And then the same people "in the gray austere evening" bury him secretly with prayers, and conceive of him as a martyr; and martyrdom, as the church had always said, is "a kind of sacrament with plenary grace." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ The meaning of Pater, in giving Marius the sacraments in "extreme helplessness," is plain. Marius remained, in the author's conception, a philosopher, therefore a doubter, to the last. He succumbed by force of circumstances to the tender influence of the lives of the Christians, their simple ceremonial. He had come, by the senses, into rapport with their spiritual rapture, and in the Extreme Unction, the senses were symbolically sanctified and their kinship with the purely spiritual emphasized. The senses suggestively are pronounced to be sacramental, a part of "the out-

ward sign of the inward grace," and lurking in the restraint of the description of the death of Marius is a hint that the "last anguish" is but a slipping into a newer, higher sensuousness of calm. ¶ This is a very naturalistic explanation of the steps by which, as any one may readily understand, a refined, sympathetic Roman, disgusted with the civilization he saw crumbling about him, and disappointed in the *summum bonum* which this or that philosophy, prior to the coming of the Christians, had to offer, might have come to accept the Church; although it is stated with an explicitness as great as the writer under consideration ever permitted himself to indulge, Marius was not a Christian ❧ The true believer will find Pater's endeavor to explain, through Marius, the natural growth of the creed, almost offensive. The book makes Christianity a growth out of the needs of the world, not only for the mob, the submerged tenth, the proletariat of the time, but for the cultivated Roman saturated in the wisdom of the ancients ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ However, whatever may be its defects as to the presentation of a logical explanation of the grip

which the creed took upon the world, there is no disputing the merits of the novel as a specimen of style in writing. If you have read a book called *Intentions,* or if you have seen a play called *Lady Windermere's Fan,* and have also read Walter Pater you will have observed that there is something of the same quality of art in each author. The resemblance between the two is vague, perhaps, but it is there. There is a preciosity in each that is exotic. There is in each an insistent self-consciousness. There is in both an intense concern with the idea that life shall be made an art. In both there is something femininely over-meticulous. Pater, however, had restraint. The other author is simply mad to say bright things. Pater may think fancifully or fantastically, arabesquing upon his ideas and developing curiosities of speculation or analogy upon his thought. The other takes the easier method to startle or please the reader, in adopting the attitude of perversity deliberately and with every determination to deceive by trickery into a belief in his originality. There is not in *Marius the Epicurean* one passage of passion of the earthly sort, yet there are passages

in abundance that find the heart and stir its core with mere love of a beautiful day, a flash of landscape, a dalliance with an idea or a phantasy. The whole book teems with the pathos of beauty, a pathos like that of remembered or distant singing, a pathos like that which smites one in the cathedral effects of light in woods of long past summer evenings ❧ This sensuousness of the volume in time appears to the reader to have a distinct quality of sanctity. The joy of life is so keenly felt, and at the same time so held in restraint, that one fancies that it must have been not at all difficult for the Christian idea to find hospitable reception in the mind and heart of one who loved the world as did Marius ❧ Quietude is the sum of all the charms of this story of soul and sense. The volume is Thomas a Kempis transmuted into the mood of the men who were saddened by Rome's decay. Its calm is the result of minute laboriousness. The effect of simplicity in the style is contrived by the almost exhausting complexity of the finishing ❧ The narration is written, at least impliedly, in imitation of that book of Apuleius, to which Flavian introduced Marius, which Pater,

imitating the immediate successors of Apuleius, calls "the Golden Book." Of the book of Apuleius, Pater writes a chapter verging upon rhapsody. He describes, perhaps not altogether unconsciously, in this chapter, his own work. It is "full of archaisms and curious felicities, quaint terms and images picked from the early dramatists, the life-like phrases of some lost poet preserved by an old grammarian, racy morsels of the vernacular and studied prettiness—all alike, mere playthings for the genuine power & natural eloquence of the erudite artist unsuppressed by his erudition." His style has not "that old-fashioned, unconscious ease of the early literature." It is marked by "the infinite patience" of Apuleius. He has words "for conveying, with a single touch, the sense of textures, colors, incidents." "Like jewelers' work." "Like a myrrhine vase." Pater uses the common speech, when not disporting himself in curious refinements of utterance "with all the care of a learned language." *Marius the Epicurean* is perhaps the one English book that would have ecstacized into stillness the souls of Gautier and Baudelaire and de Maupassant. In sensuous pictur-

esqueness the style, simple in spite of its multiplied involutions and parentheses, is the despairing delight of all who feel that utterance by word of mouth or pen, should convey every sensation. Its asceticism of luxury is exasperating. It is alive with the tantalization of glamour. It holds whiffs of half-forgotten incense, ghost-sounds of "tired bells chiming in their sleep"; recalls all old, sad things of youth ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ To those who have been fascinated by the tawdriness of *Quo Vadis,*—the Christianity as tawdry as the pagan barbarity—it is feared that the delicate beauty, veiling almost irresistible strength, of the Pater romance will hardly appeal ❧ The work is the projection of a mood of deep sympathy for the old dying paganism, which, in some of its higher forms, contained implications of a yearning for that gentleness which the Christ came to proclaim. The story illustrates, by slow development, in the pedestrian style, the steady growth of the truth that man cannot live either by reason or by the enjoyment of the present hour alone. Gradually the appeal of the Christian idea bears down, by its superior humanity, by its presentation

of the thought that the most exalted sensuousness is attainable in an affection which may reach out to all men, & even unto Divinity itself, all obstruction in the shape of the old Roman exclusiveness and intense intellectual pride. In the new creed and its ritual there was manifest "a generous eclecticism within the bounds of liberty." They were gathering and serviceably adapting to their ends things from all sources, Gnostic, Jewish, Pagan. Above all, the course of thought led up to by the early, pure creed of the Christians suggested that man was no longer the helpless, hopeless victim of Nature, but that there existed for Marius at least, a heart, even as his own, behind the vain show of things ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ And thus, as it seems to me, *Marius the Epicurean* is a Bible of the true religion of the higher sensuousness, dignifying, in a peculiar way, our mortality and fleshliness, by showing how they may, and do, tend upward to the purely spiritual conception of the scheme of the world and the ends of man beyond the grave and "beyond the flaming ramparts of the world." ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ ❧ It is a religion that is one with Art and Science

and Song and Hope and Memory and Joy and Suffering—all the shapes that Beauty takes. It is not wholly a cultus *de contemptu mundi,* for it finds in the pity of fleetingness an added glamour upon things and a hint at glories that shall not pass away. The gradual and almost complete surrender of Epicureanism to the new creed seems to be a demonstration that happiness & goodness may be attained by making the most, in a high way, of this, the only world we surely know, by cultivating in the senses, the soul, until the senses, as soul, seem to reach out and apprehend in almost tangible fashion the realities of the unseen.

So here endeth *The Law of Love,* as written by William Marion Reedy, and done into a book by The Roycrofters, at their Shop, which is in East Aurora, New York, Nineteen Hundred and Five









